

**A HISTORY OF THE PROFESSIONALISATION OF HUMAN RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA:  
1945 - 1995**

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**In accordance with the regulations of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, I certify that the contents of this thesis are my own work unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text**

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## ABSTRACT

Human resource management as practiced today within organisations carries a century of history. Focus has shifted from its simple origins as a welfare concern for the lot of workers by certain enlightened employers in Great Britain to the current human resource management which is an integral part of the management of an organisation. It has moved from being a peripheral to an essential service. This shift has been accompanied by an ongoing attempt to achieve professional recognition for human resource practitioners whose occupation it is to implement the principles and practices of human resource management

The study endeavours to present and analyse the history of the professionalisation of human resource management in South Africa. It is a story which has not been previously researched, other than in a passing manner by a few authors in South Africa in text books on the theories and practices of human resource management. This study is therefore a first detailed investigation into the subject of the professionalisation of human resource management in this country.

The study focuses on a period from 1945 to 1995 which represents the most formative years of professionalisation in South Africa. Appropriate background contextual material is included to enable an informed assessment to be made of the South African experience, which covers the concept of professionalisation, experience in Great Britain and the United States of America together with relevant references to South African history. Human resource management is not practiced in isolation and the historical process of professionalisation needs to be assessed both contextually and conceptually.

The fifty year period of the study allows for an understanding of the nature of human

resource management to emerge and to assess whether professional status has been achieved. The research period commences with the establishment of the Institute of Personnel Management in 1945 and traces developments from then up to a unique Institute convention in 1995 where a symbolic reconciliation takes place between black and white practitioners. South African racial history had an effect on the process of professionalisation and the study reveals the implications. The process of professionalisation is observed to be ongoing and continued attempts at achieving statutory recognition for the profession are noted in the study and assessed.



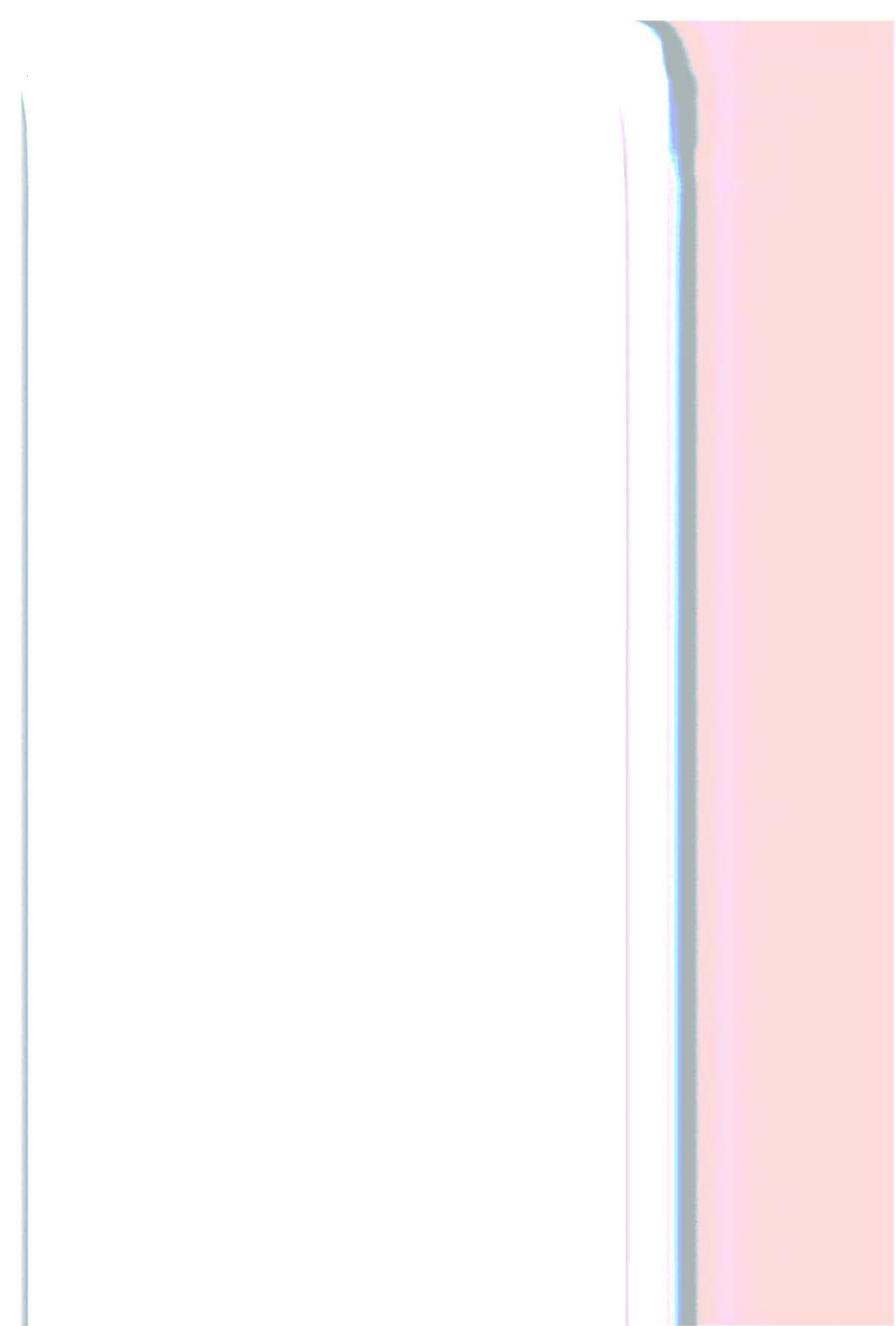
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Affirmative action
AFCWU	African Food and Canning Workers Union
ANC	African National Congress
AHI	Afrikaanse Handels Insitituut
APP	African personnel practitioner
ASSOCOM	Association of Chambers of Commerce
BLRRA	Bantu Labour Relations Regulations Amendment Act
BMF	Black Management Forum
BPO	Black personnel officer
BPP	Black personnel practitioner
BPTP	Black personnel and training practitioners
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CWIU	Chemical Industrial Workers Union
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
CUSA	Council of Unions of South Africa
EEC	European Economic Community
FCI	Federated Chamber of Industries
FOSATU	Federation of South African Trade Unions
HNP	Herstigte Nasionale Party
HR	Human resources
HRM	Human resource management
HRP	Human resource practitioner
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ICU	Industrial and Commercial Workers Union
ICA	Industrial Conciliation Act
IR	Industrial relations
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
IPM	Institute of Personnel Management
LRA	Labour Relations Act
LIRI	Leather Industries Research Institute
NDMF	National Development and Management Foundation
NAFCOC	National African Federated Chamber of Commerce
NIPR	National Institute of Personnel Research
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSB	National Standards Bodies
NUSAS	National Union of South African Students
NUTW	National Union of Textile Workers
NEPTDASA	Non-European Personnel Training and Development Association
PAC	Pan African Congress

PPWAWU	Paper Pulp Wood and Allied Workers Union
PM	Personnel management
PMA	Personnel Management Association
PPA	Personnel Practitioners Association
SIRSA	Sielkundige Instituut van die Republiek van Suid Afrika
SABPP	South African Board of Personnel Practice
SACWU	South African Chemical workers Union
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACTU	South African Council of Trade Unions
SAIPM	South African Institute of Personnel Management
SAIRR	South African Institute of Race Relations
SALB	South African Labour Bulletin
PASA	South African Psychological Association
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority Act
SASTD	South African Society for Training and Development
SASO	South African Students Organisation
SEIFSA	Steel and Engineering Federation of South Africa
TUCSA	Trade Union Council of South Africa
UTP	Urban Training Project
UNISA	University of South Africa

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

The profile of human resource management (HRM) has become more prominent in recent times due to its increasingly important role in the success of organisations. Accompanying this trend is the drive within human resource practitioners (HRPs) to be recognised as professionals. In this they are no different from other newer occupations seeking the additional credibility accorded to them if they can proclaim to belong to a recognised “profession”. The progress towards the professional status of an occupation is a process that may be observed historically as the occupation moves to meet whatever criteria are required to achieve this status. How an occupation strives to achieve professional recognition is an important and valid area of historical research and analysis. It is the purpose of this study to investigate that historical process in respect of human resource management practice in South Africa. The limitation of the study to the period from 1945 - 1995 was determined by certain significant events that took place in these two years. The fact of a convenient fifty year milestone is coincidental.

This chapter will provide a brief introduction to HRM together with illustrations of analytical models used by scholars to present the history of the development of HRM. A further section will outline briefly, the concept of professionalism so as to establish what is expected of an occupation to validate a claim to such status. The debate over what constitutes a profession has been ongoing for more than fifty years and is still unresolved. It is for this reason that an historical analysis of the process in South Africa is important as it can make a contribution to the debate.

The striving for a recognised professional status by HRPs in South Africa can not be separated from the history of the development of HRM in this country. The two are

integrally linked. These developments, furthermore, took place within the unique South African historical context. The story of the striving for professionalism is inseparable from what was taking place in the country and influenced markedly the professionalisation process that was occurring. The important historical events in South Africa will not be included in the introductory chapter, but at the commencement of each chapter in order to more closely identify the linkages to HRM developments.

### **The Nature of the Study**

In South Africa there is a lack of detailed recorded research into the history of personnel/human resource management. Academics provide brief introductions in their text books on human resource management, but no substantial history is available<sup>1</sup>. As a consequence there is a lack of a specific history of the process of the professionalising of the occupation of the human resource practitioner. Contemporary efforts at furthering the professionalising process could benefit from a detailed investigation into the history of the experience of the professionalising process. It is important to the occupation that this history be examined, analysed and interpreted as a contribution to the ongoing debate in HRM circles over professionalisation.

The study sets out :

1. To enquire into how HRM theory and practice evolved in South Africa as a means of understanding the professionalisation process
2. To identify whether there were significant influential stages in the development of the professionalisation of HRM in South Africa.

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<sup>1</sup> P.S Nel (Co-ordinating author), Human Resources Management (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 2001), is an example of a textbook on HRM.



3. To establish when, where and why the most important developments took place.
4. To discover whether there were individuals or institutions who/which contributed significantly to the process of professionalisation and in what way.

The study attempts to locate, record and interrogate the data available on the development of HRM and thereby to allow the process of professionalisation to be identified from the available sources. The anticipated outcome of this research is to establish whether HRM, as an occupation, has achieved professional status. If not, to suggest what remains to be undertaken on the basis of an acceptable formula for achieving professional status. It is an essential exercise to enable the current debate on the professional status of HRM to have appropriate depth, as well as assessing the effectiveness of past attempts at achieving professional status. The study takes on added significance today in light of the high emphasis placed on broader issues of the national development of 'human resources' in South Africa. It is, therefore, important to keep the research focussed on the practice of HRM to avoid confusing HRM's primary function with the broader national issues of 'human resource development'.

Data for the study was collected from research papers, dissertations, government documents, newspapers, personal interviews, journals, private collections, letters, theses and texts. The records of the Institute of People (previously 'Personnel') Management (IPM), an essential source, are incomplete, with many files of correspondence and minutes having been lost, destroyed or thrown away over the years up to recent times. The nature of HRM practice requires that the social-political environment be provided to enable a meaningful interpretation to be attempted.

## **Human Resource Management .**

The practice of HRM in South African organisations has developed over many years. Commencing as an employee welfare orientated service in the 1930s, the emphasis was gradually replaced by a more management and company focussed “personnel management” function in the 1940s. The re-focussing of emphasis continued until by the 1980s “human resource management” emerged as the term of choice. The human resource practitioner (HRP) by this time was being called to show that HRM could markedly influence organisational success measured by bottom-line results. By the 1990s this contribution was the test of credibility and success of HRM and its practitioners. HRPs were increasingly found at the centre of organisations, playing a more strategic planning role within their companies. This more critical role led to a re-defining of HRM as “strategic human resource management” (SHRM).

The literature reveals a range of differing definitions and explanations of HRM according to the academic’s own perception and conceptualisation. Tyson focussed on the “employment relationship” and understood HRP’s to be essentially, “specialists in the employment relationship”<sup>2</sup>. Torrington and Hall understood ‘personnel management’ in essence to be about “working relationships.”<sup>3</sup> These concepts do not exclude the recognition that working people come from society at large, which impacts on the work situation. It is instructive to note that the British Institute of Personnel and Development (IPD), in their promotional literature do not define HRM, but list twenty-three areas of specialised attention in which a range of HRPs may be involved, some in specialised

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<sup>2</sup> S Tyson, “Specialists in Ambiguity”. Unpublished PhD thesis. London: University of London, 1979.

<sup>3</sup> D Torrington and L Hall, Personnel Management: A New Approach (Englewood-Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1987).

categories. The South African Board of Personnel Practice (SABPP) in their promotional material do not attempt a definition, but outline rather, what qualities are required of a 'professional' HRP. For the purposes of this study, HRM is viewed as the management of people in a work situation.

The major sub-divisions of HRM provide a useful summary of the various fields that are covered by the discipline. These categories have not changed much over the last 25 years and are offered as a useful illustration of the areas of expert knowledge required by a HRP to be able to offer a skilled service. The following are recognised sub-divisions of HRM, which list is not intended to be complete as many variations in title may be found, as well as numerous sub-sections,

Employee Assistance Programmes, (eg., health, Aids, counselling)

Human Resource Planning

Industrial Relations including Labour Law

Performance Appraisal

Personnel Administration (eg., records, pension, medical aid) , including applicable software

Remuneration

Selection and Recruitment

Training and Development

An illustration of a sub-section would be 'organisational development' as part of Training and Development.

In the earlier years covered by the study the term "personnel management" and its derivatives "personnel manager", "personnel practitioner" and "personnel practice" are used in their historical context, as that was the terminology used at the time. From the 1980s, the use of "human resource management" became more common as a result of

newer interpretations of its function closer to the core of the business. The study use of the term, HRM, follows this change. Human resource management in this research is seen as a body of knowledge which is applied in practice and referred to as human resource management ‘practice’.

In similar manner the title “personnel practitioner” is followed in this research up to the 1980s. The origin of this usage may be traced to Professor Langenhoven and his many research studies into personnel practice in South Africa.<sup>4</sup> He recommended the term ‘practitioner’ to provide a common form for a trained person with specific knowledge and skill in personnel management, normally with recognisable academic qualifications and a certain level of experience. The South African Board of Personnel Practice (SABPP) later applied the term, ‘practitioner’ to the higher level of registration and “technician” to the lower qualified and less experienced registered person. For the purposes of this study “practitioner” is used and refers theoretically to those who have a level of authority in their organisation with decision making ability to influence the course of the application of HRM.

A special usage will be seen to apply in this study in respect of the early history of black personnel functionaries in South Africa. Their term of choice from the early 1970s was “black personnel practitioner” (BPP) and was used for a range of personnel job functions, few of whom at that time had reached management level, for reasons which will emerge in the research.

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<sup>4</sup> H P Langenhoven, “Training in Personnel Management: Present Status and Needs in South Africa.” University of the Orange Free State (UOFS), Department of Industrial Psychology. 1976. H P Langenhoven and H F Daniels, “Investigation on the Professionalisation of Expert Personnel Management.” Bloemfontein. UOFS. Department of Industrial Psychology, 1980.

## Human Resource Management from an Historical Perspective

A number of human resource management academics who have observed the historical progression of the discipline, have adopted different methods of identifying the trends that developed over time. Being a relatively young field of study, with less than a hundred years of history, there is thus not the same historical depth as with much older occupations, such as medicine, law or religion.

The analytic frameworks of three prominent HRM writers are briefly presented, none of whom, it is noted, are historical researchers, but recognised as authorities in their subject<sup>5</sup> This section is included as it also provides a broad, although not comprehensive, introduction to the elements common to the operation of a personnel/human resource function in an organisation. That these illustrations come from the USA and Great Britain is indicative of the strong influence from those countries on personnel/human resource management practice in SA from inception.

### 1. Cascio's Four Growth Stages in HRM

W F Cascio, a prominent American HRM academic, identifies four discernible stages in the development of HRM in the USA, which provided for him an intelligible grouping of HRM activities.<sup>6</sup> The stages are illustrative of the general progression of HRM, albeit in an American context.

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<sup>5</sup> This section has drawn on the review of the literature for developing an historical background for a study of the ambiguities in human resource management in South Africa and the potential impact of these ambiguities on levels of stress among a sample of HRPs in R L Legg's "Sources of Stress among HRPs." Unpublished PhD dissertation . Durban. University of Natal, 2002.

<sup>6</sup> W F Cascio, Managing Human Resources (New York. McGraw-Hill, 1995), pp.34-40.



Up to the mid 1960s, Cascio identified an initial *File Maintenance* stage in the development of HRM where the emphasis was on employee concerns. Personnel departments focussed on such activities as, screening applicants, induction programmes, maintenance of employee records, organising company social events and general employee welfare. In South Africa similar activities could be found in personnel departments up to the early 1970s.

This was followed by the *Government Accountability* stage. With the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other legislation in the 1970s in the USA, increased demands were placed on employers to conform to the requirements of a range of new laws for improving the lot of employees, all of which accelerated the rise of the importance of the personnel function. The new anti-discrimination, pension, health and safety laws which were introduced forced a new set of priorities on personnel departments. Employers wanted to avoid costly court actions and looked to their personnel departments to provide specialists with the competencies to guide their companies.

Although South Africa for many years had in place employee protection legislation, the more significant legislation began from the 1980s. A similar process commenced in South Africa, although the order is different, with the Labour Relations Act (1981). Over a decade later a series of new Acts was passed, namely, the Occupational Health and Safety Act (1993), the new Labour Relations Act (1995), amendments to the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (1997), the Employment Equity Act (1998), the Skills Development Act (1998). Most had time consuming implications for HRPs and consultants, who were required to provide guidance and avoid costly failures for their companies.

In the 1970s and 1980s a combination of political, social and economic factors placed

pressure on companies in the USA to reduce costs, which Cascio identified as the *Organisational Accountability* stage. High interest rates, growing international competition and shrinking productivity, conspired to demand greater dollar accountability from functional areas of the business. Personnel functions were equally pressured to be 'dollar accountable'. Social trends accelerated demands for improving quality of life at work, managing cultural and ethnic diversity, and for ongoing training and re-training of employees. These trends arose following the external focus on the place of women, minorities, immigrants, poorly educated workers. These social factors, in addition to the economic realities, called for adaptability and improved skills from personnel practitioners.

Elements in this stage, although lagging by a decade, can be identified readily in South Africa from the late 1980s. Affirmative action, quality of working life, increased investment in training, adult basic education, were common features of the larger companies. In the mid 1990s, with the election of the new democratic government, the emphasis increased in these areas. A new commitment was brought in the form of "equity" legislation for those 'previously disadvantaged'. Training and development targets were increased and other requirements of the new legislation were progressed, probably exceeding what had occurred in the USA.

The final *Strategic Partnership* stage emerges with the new focus on strategic human resource management in the 1990s. HRM could be found in partnership with core company management to be playing a key role to "gain and sustain a competitive advantage in the worldwide market place." This 'strategic partnership' was required by companies to cut costs and obtain the maximum contribution from their human resources in response to the company need "to enhance competitiveness and to add value to the firm in everything it does." A similar pattern began to emerge in South Africa, which

accelerated after 1994, with the advent of a new democratic dispensation, the reduction in economic protectionism and the full impact of global competition beginning to be felt.

Although Cascio's approach tracks broad trends in the USA, similar trends may readily be identified in South Africa. However, he does not use the analysis to track specifically the process of professionalisation.

## 2. T J Watson's "Waves of Theory"

Watson, a prominent British academic in the 1970's and 1980's, in his study of behavioural and employment aspects of the managing of work organisations, developed a wave analogy in which to set the historical dimension of his analysis<sup>7</sup>. His approach offers opportunity to recognise the continuity between different movements or schools of thought which influenced the 'human dimension' of managing the employment relationship within an organisation.

Watson rejected the traditional approach where ideas are presented as belonging to successive schools of thought, which are then recorded sequentially. In that traditional approach a new 'school' emerges to discredit or replace what went before. Watson prefers to recognise that older ideas in management and organisational thought still have a major impact on actual practice. The older wave still contains valuable insights which contribute to newer understandings. Hence the use of the waves analogy. New ideas, like new waves, arrive and appear to cover up those which came before them. In reality, however, they merge with what came before as well as clashing with them.

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<sup>7</sup> T J Watson, Management, Organisation and Employment Strategy (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986).



Of Watson's three applications, one is considered as specifically relevant to this study, viz., the history of the theory of the management of people.<sup>8</sup> He acknowledges that his method of grouping has little validity other than to assist the reader find a way through a potentially frightening mass of different ideas and theories.

The first wave occurs where people are seen as machines. Within this stage fall the division of labour, Taylorism (scientific management) and Fordism (mass production). This is followed by the second wave where people are seen as having needs. This wave includes the human relations thinkers, democratic humanism as found in such researchers as Kurt Lewin, A H Maslow, Renis Likert, Douglas McGregor and others. The third wave builds on the social scientists of the second wave. The mental and cognitive processes through which an individual proceeds now become important. The world outside the workplace becomes significant with its political, economic and social implications for the individual. Balance and equity theories, expectancy and cultural and symbolic management ideas come to the fore.

Watson's analogy of waves was applied specifically to organisational structure and employment strategy within Great Britain. It has relevance to historical developments in relation to general HRM. It is more problematic when applied to labour history with its often stark historical cut-offs, where, particularly in the context of South African, industrial relations history, the historical sequence of events has importance. The significance of the "waves of theory" is the reminder that ideas and their application have grown mostly out of the past, and that the past is intermingled with new and current interpretations. This view has special relevance when trying to trace the process of professionalisation in South Africa.

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<sup>8</sup> Watson, Management, pp. 86-132.

### 3. Armstrong's "Three Streams of Development" in Human Resource Management

Michael Armstrong, a well known British academic in HRM, in order to obtain a historical perspective on the development of the HRM function, traced what he perceived as three streams of development converging into the human resource management pool.<sup>9</sup> A diagrammatic presentation of the Armstrong model is found in the Appendices<sup>10</sup>

His purpose was to simplify the tracing of HRM developments from its origins to explain the sources for his concept of "entrepreneurial personnel management." It is not necessary to accept his thesis of entrepreneurship to find value in his historical format. Nor does one need to accept his three streams merging into a HRM "pool". However, the "three streams" provide a useful format for unravelling some of the complexities of HRM history. Armstrong's "entrepreneurial pool" is a contemporary interpretation to explain current emphases in HRM and the necessary orientation of HRPs. In a future time, some other concept may be required to analyse the historical developments in HRM in relation to newer and yet unknown environments.

Armstrong's three streams, viz., personnel management, human relations and industrial relations, allow for the influence of the "behavioural science movement", the "excellence factor", the "Japanese connection" and significantly, a contemporary focus on the need for entrepreneurial creativity within management thinking which they require to obtain competitive advantage in the market place.

The model does not allow sufficient credence to the contribution of training and development, which in SA has made a significant addition to HRM. Armstrong does

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<sup>9</sup> M. Armstrong, Personnel and the Bottom Line (Wimbledon: IPM, 1989)

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix 1.1.

allow for a clearly delineated role for industrial relations which fits the South African situation and he indicates the influence of the behavioural sciences on industrial relations. His concept of “mutuality” is premature in the still highly divided and conflictual SA labour context. The three streams are briefly outlined below as well as the core stream.

The source in the model commences with the *Personnel Management Stream* which springs from its origins in the welfare services offered by enlightened companies at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, through the emergence of personnel administration, and on to its broadening involvement in specialised services. These specialised services included, for example, psychometric testing, job evaluation, merit rating, management by objectives. The same elements have been equally formative in personnel management in South Africa.

A later source arises with the *Human Relations/Behavioural Science Stream*, which originates with the influence of Elton Mayo and Kurt Lewin in the 1930s and the human relations school which arose from their thinking. This approach developed into the behavioural science movement under the influence of Chris Argyris, Frederick Herzberg, Renis Likert, Douglas MacGregor and others in the 1960s. Out of this thinking emerged emphases on quality of working life, motivation of employees, organisational health, organisational development (OD) and other trends based on behavioural science concepts. Armstrong notes that these behavioural science concepts influenced traditional personnel management and the employee relations dimension of industrial relations. The influence of the behavioural sciences are acknowledged to have been very strong in South Africa.

The *Industrial Relations (IR) Stream* has its origin in the very nature of the employment relationship. It manifests itself with the emergence of industrial relations as a pervasive element in HRM and the creating of an IR function to meet specialised demands, such as

wage and benefits negotiations, productivity agreements and structured communication programmes. From the 1980s onwards in South Africa, aggressive and confrontational industrial relations dominated the activities of most company HR departments, which usually limited the possibility of more creative and participatory approaches to the solution of IR issues.

The Armstrong model allows for acknowledging two potent influences on HRM in the form of the “Japanese connection” and participatory methods described by Armstrong as “mutuality” between the main parties to the employment relationship. Again, South Africa was strongly affected by introduction of these techniques.

For Armstrong the three streams merge into the *Human Resource Management Confluence*. He takes this historical integration of HRM to the point where he identifies the current need in HRM for “entrepreneurial personnel management.” Feeding into this “confluence” or central core of HRM, are two currently important elements of the contemporary business world, that of ‘enterprise culture’ and ‘the changing management context’. These two elements heavily influence the nature of HRM and its needed focus on “entrepreneurial personnel management.”

The three approaches outlined above, coming from the history of HRM in the USA and Great Britain, provide a useful comparative framework of the developments of HRM and in so doing allow a bird’s eye view of the broad scope of HRM practice in South Africa.

### **The Professionalisation of Human Resource Management**

The initial problem in researching the professionalisation of human resource management is found in defining a “profession”. On what basis may one refer to an occupation as a

“profession”? Common parlance loosely refers to numerous jobs as ‘professions’ and that the incumbents provide ‘professional service’ without specifically defining what is meant by ‘profession’. The next problem is the range of definitions on offer. It is not the intention of this Introduction to provide a comprehensive overview of the debate within the social sciences, who have discussed the topic consistently over the past fifty or more years. However, it is important to note a few definitions to clarify understanding. Freidson provides one comprehensive view:

Professionalisation may be defined as a process by which an organised occupation, usually but not always by virtue of making a claim to special esoteric competence and to concern for the quality of its work and its benefits to society, obtains the exclusive right to perform a particular kind of work, control, training for and access to it, and control of the right to determining and evaluating the way the work is performed.<sup>11</sup>

In Friedson’s understanding, professionalism becomes defined as occupational control rather than an expression of the inherent nature of a particular occupation.

Elliott on the other hand, maintained that the title ‘profession’ was foremost a claim to social standing and recognition.<sup>12</sup> In this sense his understanding shifts the meaning from occupational content to resultant status.

Millerson pointed out that there are problems with definition which are due to the assumption that professionalism is a static phenomenon rather than a dynamic process.

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<sup>11</sup> E Friedson, The Professions and Their Prospects (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1973), p.12.

<sup>12</sup> P Elliott, The Sociology of the Professions (London: MacMillan Press, 1972), p.5.

He argued that the dynamic process operated at three different levels.<sup>13</sup> These are: (i) the level of professionalism as part of general social change; (ii) the level of organisation of the occupation, where different occupations aspire to achieve professional status; (iii) the level of the individual where individuals become practising members of a profession as part of their occupational qualification to enable them to practice their particular 'profession'.

One of the reasons for the ongoing debate is due to the dynamic process to which 'professions' are subjected. The process is complicated by the increase in the number of occupations claiming professional status, which appear to arise with the growth in the sophistication of society, expanding industrialisation, technological advances, and the resultant complexity of economic activity. These developments have resulted in the industrialised countries having most of their people living in cities and urban areas. The literature indicates that this ongoing industrialisation coincides with the growth in occupations claiming professional status. The literature further suggests that in these occupations there can be observed a process of moving towards the stage where a claim for such status may be made. This phenomenon has been extensively examined by sociologists who have studied this trend in terms of a "process of professionalisation."

An important element in conceptualising professionalism can be found in the historical origins of the earliest forms of professionalism. For example, one of the early formative thinkers on professionalism was Emile Durkheim<sup>14</sup>. He was among the first to explore the question of the links between occupational organisation and specialised groups. For

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<sup>13</sup> G Millerson, The Qualifying Associations: A Study in Professionalization (London: Kegan and Paul, 1964).

<sup>14</sup> E Durkheim, Suicide: A Study in Sociology (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952). (first published, 1897).



him the basic unit in society was the family. He anticipated that the occupational group would develop a form like the family, but on a larger scale. He hoped these groups would occupy a mid-point between the state and the family in the social structure of society. He suggested two parallels for this form of organisation, the medieval guilds and the Roman Collegia. According to Durkheim, while the family was the basic communal unit in the agricultural community, the collegia or the guilds took over many of its functions in the craft economy.

Durkheim argued that the development of the industrial economy has converted economic activity from a minor and despised part of social life to the predominant activity. He believed that some form of occupational organisation was necessary in business to provide a code of moral practice in place of unrestrained economic activity. He did not have in mind a form of trade union for workmen alone, but occupational corporations embracing both employers and employees, in much the same way as the medieval guilds included master craftsmen, journeymen and apprentices.

Studies of professionalisation have been divided into different approaches depending on the perspective from which the researcher comes to the subject. Louw provides a useful summary of these various perspectives.<sup>15</sup> For example, he distinguished between the older and newer professions. The older professions include medicine and law. The more recent aspirants to professional status include psychology and human resource management. The debate in this respect has centred on whether the newcomers are indeed professionals in terms of the traditional classification which was based on the emergence of a full-time occupation, a sense of 'calling and service', a body of knowledge, professional association and a code of ethics to govern the members and hold them to account for their service and behaviour. A second distinction is made between

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<sup>15</sup> J Louw, Professionalizing Psychology (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1990).

independent practice and salaried employment. The medical profession is an example. Doctors were previously only self-employed providing a service for which they were paid by their patients. But today, they may be found in the employ of corporations, undermining the original distinction. In this sense the professional doctor becomes a member of two institutions, the professional medical association and the corporation. This dual allegiance may lead to a conflict of interests between dedication and vows to the profession and the demands of the business.

Research into personnel management as a profession has formed the basis for a number of occupational studies. In the USA, Ritzer and Trice submitted that the way personnel managers were treated resulted in different sorts of commitment, either to the organisation or to the 'occupation'.<sup>16</sup> The modern HR practitioner may claim to belong to a professional institute but is also part of a management team required to conform to company policy. This distinction was made by Watson from his interviews with personnel managers, and as a means of classification it thus has less significance and validity in more recent times with the growth of corporations.<sup>17</sup> Tyson's research indicated that the only source of reward and status for personnel managers was the organisation, of which they must be seen to be 'organisation men'.<sup>18</sup> He argued that there was a "broad occupational identity" but not a sufficiently closely knit strategy to warrant special status. He did not find in his research in Great Britain that there was the notion that being formally classified as a 'profession' was as important to personnel managers as some studies would try to suggest.

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<sup>16</sup> G Ritzer and H M Trice, An Occupation in Conflict: A Study of the Personnel Manager (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1969).

<sup>17</sup> T J Watson, The Personnel Managers ( London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977).

<sup>18</sup> S Tyson, Specialists. Also, S Tyson and A Fell, Evaluating the Personnel Function (Cheltenham: Stanley Thorne, 1979).



Perhaps the most explicit, and oft quoted effort to develop a systematic approach to identify an ideal type of profession, was undertaken by Wilensky<sup>19</sup> in the early 1960s. From his detailed research into the origins and history of eighteen occupations, he identified six as “established”, such as law and medicine, and seven he categorised as “in process” or else “marginal”, such as nursing, school teaching, librarianship. Others were classified as “new”, for example, hospital administration, or “doubtful”, for example, funeral direction.

The Wilensky study revealed that there appeared to be “a typical sequence of events” which may be identified in most of the occupations studied, which suggested a process of professionalisation existed which may be applied to other occupations seeking to claim professional status. The process he discovered went through five identifiable stages.

1. The emergence of a full-time occupation. For example, nursing has always been undertaken, but technical and organisational developments created nursing as an occupation.
2. The establishment of specific tertiary training. Pressure would be exerted for training to meet the needs of the discipline. For example, the training could be in the form of targeted courses or for specific university courses. Wilensky found that the instructors on these courses were often the most enthusiastic protagonists of the new discipline.
- 3 The establishment of a professional association: Those who have gone through prescribed training emerge as the first to combine to form professional associations. Wilensky suggested that, “Activists in the association engage in much soul-searching - on

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<sup>19</sup> H I Wilensky, “The Professionalization of Everyone?” The American Journal of Sociology. LXX (2), September 1964, p. 137 - 158.

whether the occupation is a profession, what the professions tasks are, how to raise the quality of recruits, and so on.” This is the stage where there is hard competition with “neighbouring occupations”. Wilensky argues that, “All occupations in the human-relations field have only tenuous claims to exclusive competence.” This situation arises, partly from the newness and uncertainty of the standards required, but also due to the embryonic state of the social and psychological sciences on which they draw. Although personnel management, as it would have been known in 1964, was not specifically observed by Wilensky, it could arguably fall into this category.

4. Political activity to gain the support of law. This “agitation” is commenced to obtain the support of law for the protection of job/occupation territory. This may be seen in psychologists seeking certification and engineers wanting registration. Anyone practising outside the fraternity may be declared to practice a crime, as seen with registered medical practitioners.

5. Implementation of a code of ethics: A code of ethics is developed to eliminate the unqualified and unscrupulous. Such formal code would include rules to protect clients and emphasise the service ideal. Wilensky suggested that the introduction of a code of ethics represented the beginning of the push for professional status.

There has been considerable debate around Wilensky’s five stages. Some commentators have accepted and applied it <sup>20</sup>, others have adapted it and others rejected it as too rigid<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> G P Louw, “Die Professionalisering van die Psilogie in Suid Afrika: ‘n Historiese Vergelykende Perspektief.” Potchefstroom: U.P vir H.K N.O, 1990. applied this approach to the professionalisation of psychology in SA.. This is a very detailed PhD historical study of 1381 pages, undertaken within the History Department at Potchefstroom University. See also, C van der Westhuizen, L J van Vuuren and D Visser. “Human Resource Management as a Profession in SA: Practitioners’ Perspectives.” Unpublished Research Project. Johannesburg: Dept of Human Resource Management, Rand Afrikaans University. 2003. N M Coetzee, “Onderwys as ‘n Professie:’n Bestuursopgaaf.” Unpublished MEd Thesis.

The Wilensky concept has been referred to as the ‘trait’ approach with recognisable stages in a progression to achieving professional recognition. Despite criticism from some sources its criteria are a useful reminder of the steps through which an occupation may seek to progress in its professionalisation journey. These stages are noted in this current study when observing the process of the professionalisation of HRM in South Africa.

The emphasis in the study is on the process of professionalisation of HRM. This process by its nature is a matter of historical development from early beginnings to more recent times and thus falls within the history of HRM in South Africa. No previous similar study was found. A search in 1998 of the NEXUS data base of South African dissertations revealed only partly similar studies in other disciplines. Louw undertook his study of the professionalisation of psychology in South Africa as a subject of historical research<sup>22</sup> and it is maintained that this present study falls within the field of the history of HRM and subject to the discipline of historical research.

This study sets out to investigate the process of professionalisation in relation to the occupation of the human resource practitioner (HRP) who is the leading functionary in the practice of human resource management (HRM)

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Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch. Here the Wilensky concept was applied to the professionalisation of teaching management.

<sup>21</sup> J Louw, Professionalizing, arrived at a more complex ‘process’ model

<sup>22</sup> For example: Louw, Professionalizing, explores the developing professionalisation of psychology in South Africa from the perspective of a specific interpretation of the meaning of process.

## **The Thesis Structure**

The study is presented in six chapters following convenient historical periods marked by important beginning and ending events that had bearing on HRM and the process of professionalisation.

The introductory chapter sets the context and provides definitions. Chapter Two presents the early years up to 1944 with a background to the development of personnel management. The third chapter is an in depth investigation into the early phases of professionalisation from 1945-1972, identifying the launch of the Institute of Personnel Management (IPM), the growth of personnel management and the introduction of specialist education in personnel management.

The fourth chapter reveals the rapid growth of what became human resource management in a period of new challenges in South Africa from 1973-1983. In this period human resource practitioners increase in numbers, face new labour and political demands and seek formal registration for their occupation. The next chapter explores the process of professionalisation in a period of transition from 1984-1995, dealing with the altered position of the IPM on political and race issues and concludes with the formal reconciliation in 1995 between white and black practitioners.

The concluding chapter provides a summary of the research and its findings together with conclusions and suggestions for further research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE EARLY YEARS UP TO 1944**

#### **Introduction**

To obtain an informed understanding of the process of the professionalisation of human resource management in South Africa it is necessary to outline its origins in the early schools of behavioural science and management practice in both the United States of America and Great Britain. Without an appreciation of these foundations, developments in South Africa will lack a basis for sound analysis as it was the overseas origins that led to what ultimately emerged in South African management application.

This chapter will outline the main events and movements influencing the nature and direction of human resource management in Great Britain and the United States of America in the period up to 1944. The emergence of personnel management in this period is identified, together with the impact of overseas thinking on its direction in South Africa. The place of Isobel White is dealt with in some detail due to her influential role on the early process of professionalisation of human resource management in this country. The emergence of welfare workers, their gradual demise and the shift towards early forms of personnel management is outlined.

To interpret adequately developments in human resource management from 1945 onwards it is important to enquire into earlier events. The period up to 1944 provided the formative history of personnel management. Without this background, what follows can not be readily appreciated. The most significant events and personalities are presented.

The harsh and inhuman working conditions brought about by the industrial revolution in

Great Britain are well known and recorded, as is the role of the social reformers who initiated changes to ameliorate the dehumanising working and living conditions of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The social and industrial reform movements that arose in Great Britain and the USA, led to the appointment of industrial welfare workers just before the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They were appointed by the more socially conscious employers to alleviate some of the degrading effects of industrialisation on workers. These welfare workers were the forerunners of the early personnel practitioners.

Many text books on Personnel or Human Resource Management written over the past fifty or more years begin with references to the industrial welfare origins of personnel management. This is illustrated by I H B White 1946, A Crichton 1968, D S Beach 1985, D Torrington and L Hall 1987, C Molander 1989, W F Cascio 1995, B J Swanepoel (ed) 1998 (a South African textbook). Legg outlined these developments as an essential ingredient to understanding the inherent ambiguities in later personnel and human resource management.<sup>1</sup> E B Nzimande's research into the experience of black personnel practitioners, suggests that their origin may be found in the izibonda and izinduna of the compound system in the gold mines in the 1930s and later in other industries and Municipal Hostels in South Africa.<sup>2</sup> This identification provides an additional, uniquely South African source, for the development of black human resource practitioners in this country.

The introduction of personnel management in South Africa followed trends originating in

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<sup>1</sup> R L Legg, "Sources of Stress Among Human Resources Practitioners: A study of the Inter-Relationship between Career Orientation, Role Stress and Burnout: An Investigation into Sources of Work-Related Stress in a Sample of Human Resource Practitioners in KwaZulu Natal." Unpublished PhD Diss., Durban: University of Natal, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> E B Nzimande, "The Corporate Guerillas: Class Formation and the African Petty Bourgeoisie in Post-1973 South Africa." Unpublished PhD Diss., Durban: University of Natal, 1991. pp. 120 -180

Great Britain and the United States of America. The South African colonial past had built strong links with overseas mining, industrial and business interests, which inevitably affected the practice of personnel management. It is thus important to attempt to understand the developments in these two countries.

### **The Historical Background in Great Britain**

M M Niven produced the first in-depth research into the origins and development of the Institute of Personnel Management from 1913 to 1963 in Great Britain.<sup>3</sup> She illustrated the move from welfare service to personnel management in the context of the socio-economic pressures of the time. Crichton, in her exposition of personnel management practice reinforced the contribution made by the industrial welfare workers of the early part of the 1900s in creating a base for future personnel management.<sup>4</sup> Watson, in one of the few interview based research studies of personnel managers in Great Britain, stated that, "What can now be described as an occupation, that of the personnel specialist, has to be seen as something which emerged only gradually from its roots in the industrial 'welfare movement'."<sup>5</sup>

Behind the emergence of welfare workers lay a longer story. In Great Britain the state's laissez faire policy during the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century allowed industry to exploit workers unchecked, until the work of the social reformers, such as Peel (1788-1850) and Shaftesbury (1811-1851) assisted in bringing about changes for the better in both social and industrial life with, for example, the introduction of the Factory Acts (1833), the

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<sup>3</sup> M M Niven, Personnel Management: 1913 - 1963: The Growth of Personnel Management and the Development of the Institute ( London: IPM, 1967).

<sup>4</sup> A Crichton, Personnel Management in Context (London: Batsford, 1968).

<sup>5</sup> Watson, Personnel Managers, p.37



Mines Act (1842) and the Ten Hour Act (1847). For the purposes of this study, it is the application of social and employment reform by humanitarian entrepreneurs within their own industries which warrants attention.

As an example of the philosophy of the early industrialist social reformers, Robert Owen (1771-1858), stands out as a humanitarian entrepreneur. As a Scottish textile manufacturer, his approach was from within the business community of his day. In 1813 he wrote “A New View of Society”, outlining his philosophy, markedly in contrast to the exploitative views of the majority of industrialists of his time. One of the most popular texts on Personnel Management, noted that Owen believed that one should devote as much attention to one’s “vital machines” (*the workers*), as one did to inanimate machines.<sup>6</sup> Owen maintained that paying higher wages and creating shorter working hours was a right, but was also in the national economic interest. As an entrepreneur he was ahead of his time. His theory of higher wages was in contrast to the popular belief then, “of profits in the last hour of the working day.”<sup>7</sup>

Owen may have been displaying enlightened self-interest, but as an early example of paternalistic management, he pioneered a humanitarian concern for his workers in his cotton mills and built decent health and sanitation facilities in his factories. He went on to abolish child labour in his mills. His general interest in the welfare of his people led him to establish schools for workers and their children. The early paternalistic pioneers like Owen, “.... began to regard their workers as children to be directed and governed wisely, and their efforts were directed to the development of character, as well as to conducting their business in such a way that high profits could be made and better wages

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<sup>6</sup> D S Beach, The Management of People at Work (New York: MacMillan, 1985).

<sup>7</sup> I H B White, Personnel Research in South Africa (Port Elizabeth: Walton, 1946), p. 312.



paid than those of their competitors.”

Owen and others who thought like him, were seen as mavericks in their day, but they created a tradition of care for the human condition of their employees which left a legacy. It is this element of concern for the needs of employees which later became an enduring issue within the employment relationship. In a classic study of the history of scientific management Owen was described as “the pioneer of personnel management.”<sup>8</sup> However, Owen in the end despaired of inspiring his fellow industrialists ever changing and turned to the trade union movement to further his beliefs.<sup>9</sup> Owen died at the age of 87 years.

Whatever influence Owen had gained appears to have become lost in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the ascendancy of the economic doctrine of laissez faire, of Adam Smith, Ricardo and Malthus, whereby ‘labour’ was perceived as another commodity to be bought and sold in keeping with market forces. Improving the welfare or conditions of workers was not believed to be cost effective. The Owen message carried little weight in this climate.

The belief by employers that it was important to care for the welfare of employees revived in the closing years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when welfare workers were introduced into a small number of manufacturing plants in Great Britain. Again, by pioneering companies led by benevolent entrepreneurs, some out of Christian conviction, eg., companies owned by Quakers, like Rowntree and Cadbury and others such as Lever Brothers. Swanepoel draws attention to the period 1880-1920 in Great Britain when

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<sup>8</sup> L Urwick and EFL Brech, The Making of Scientific Management (London: MacMillan, 1964), p. 40 - 59.

<sup>9</sup> J Leatt, T Kneifel and K Nurnberger (eds), Contending Ideologies in South Africa. (Cape Town: David Philip, 1986).

important developments took place which impacted on personnel management<sup>10</sup> These welfare workers set up progressive practices which included unemployment benefits, sick pay, education, subsidised housing and other schemes beneficial to the well-being of employees and their families.

One scholar has drawn attention to the possibility of mixed motives among these early humanitarian employers “By means of a mixture of Christian conscience and enlightened self-interest, some employers responded to the growing disquiet about working conditions.”<sup>11</sup> Whatever the motives, these employers provided welfare services beneficial to their workers, which created a new humane approach to dealing with their employees.

The first welfare workers were all female with a limited role to act as the “worker’s friend”, but they were not necessarily acceptable to all parties, as Molander observed. “Even in their limited capacity they generally earned the distrust of both management and the trade unions. The former resented their intrusion into the workplace: the latter perceived them as a management device for controlling employees.”<sup>12</sup>

The welfare officers in industry have been referred to as “acolytes of benevolence”, as their function was to dispense benefits on behalf of their employer to relieve the distress of the worst affected employees.<sup>13</sup> But, as Niven notes, “It was the plight of the women

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<sup>10</sup> B J Swanepoel, South African Human Resource Management: Theory and Practice (Cape Town: Juta, 1998).

<sup>11</sup> C Molander, “Personnel Management - From Welfare to Human Resource Management” in C Molander (ed), Human Resource Management (Chartwell: Chartwell-Bratt, 1989) pp.2 -3.

<sup>12</sup> Molander, Personnel Management, p. 2.

<sup>13</sup> Torrington and Hall, Personnel Management, p.5.

and children which first struck the conscience of the public..... it was for their sake that welfare officers were first appointed.”<sup>14</sup> Whatever the merits or otherwise of the role of welfare workers in industry and the debate for and against paternalism of employers, a trend had been established which “marked a fundamental shift of employer philosophy.”<sup>15</sup>

The introduction of welfare workers into industry, emerged slowly as part of a process by employers of gradually acknowledging, whether they liked it or not, that they needed to provide welfare benefits to assist needy employees. The process of the change of attitude of larger employers occurred over a twenty to thirty year period from the late 1890s onwards.

In 1896 Mary Wood became the first industrial social worker. She was appointed at the Rowntree cocoa and chocolate factory in York. By 1913, the number of welfare workers had increased to the point where they decided to establish an association to provide for their needs. The launch of the Institute of Industrial Welfare Workers was the first indication that industrial welfare workers understood the need for an association which could develop and promote their professional status. This led to the formation of the Central Association of Welfare Workers. At a conference in 1917 it was agreed that the association should become “a professional body of all engaged in welfare work in industrial and business enterprises” and that employers and other individuals could be admitted as associates.<sup>16</sup> At their first Annual General Meeting in 1918, a definition of welfare work was drawn up. “Welfare work is that part of management which deals with the well being of those engaged in business.” Their membership was reported as over 600

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<sup>14</sup> Niven, Personnel Management, p.15.

<sup>15</sup> Torrington and Hall, Personnel Management, p.5.

<sup>16</sup> Niven, Personnel Management, pp. 49 - 56.

with thirteen branches in existence.

Reports from the Welfare Association recorded by Niven reveal, not only the changing perception of the role of welfare workers but, also, of the changes taking place in the economic and political directions in the country. In defining the role of the welfare worker, the Association stated, "He or she claims no right to interfere between organised labour and employers, recognising trade unions as the chosen means of self expression of the workers" Niven reported that the work of the Association was carried out against a background of strikes, trade depression and a state of chronic unemployment which was to persist for the next twenty years. During this time relations between employers and trade unions deteriorated and "distrust took the place of co-operation." The need for welfare departments then began to be questioned, as an increasing number of companies no longer felt welfare was essential. The Association stated:

If welfare work is to be successful, it must be undertaken by management, not merely as a means of efficiency and maximum production, but as being the duty which is owed to all those who are associated as workers or officials.<sup>17</sup>

This suggests that by the 1920s, welfare work was beginning to be understood as a management responsibility, to be undertaken for its own sake.

In 1921 the Joint Universities Council for Social Studies established a committee to investigate the training of welfare workers. Among their recommendations was a syllabus for a two year training programme of social workers, which formed the basis of training for the next twenty five years. They proposed the following courses: Industrial and Social History: Economics: Social and Political Philosophy: Elementary Statistics:

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<sup>17</sup> Niven, Personnel Management, p.56.

Industrial Law: Business Organisation: Industrial Structure and Problems. The broadness of the courses suggest a recognition that welfare workers needed a wide understanding of the business environment

The inter-war years (1918-1938) were economically tough for Great Britain and unemployment rose. Post-war recessions and the Great Depression exacerbated the situation. The role of the welfare worker declined and there were other emphases emerging to which welfare workers began to give their attention in relation to the broader issues of labour management. In 1931 this shift led to a decision to change the name from the Institute of Industrial Welfare Workers to that of the Institute of Labour Management, signalling the acceptance that a new focus had taken place in the management of employees. The focus shifted to 'labour management'. It may be noted that during the 1920s and 1930s, local wage negotiations with trade unions was accepted as the prerogative of senior management. Labour managers and welfare officers generally did not become directly involved in negotiations. In 1938 a proposal was made to change the name of the Institute of Labour Management to the Institute of Personnel Management, which signalled the broader responsibilities now being undertaken by personnel specialists. However, with the advent of the Second World War, the name change was postponed.

The war years (1939-1945) served to confirm the appropriateness of the proposed name change. The war brought a flood of human and personnel type problems into industry and business with which production managers could not cope. These problems ranged from the personal tragedy of the loss of a family member in the war to inadequate skills. By the end of the war, the role of personnel management had been recognised beyond the boundaries of individual factories as never before. It had gained the recognition of

government and was reported to have been accepted by the unions.<sup>18</sup>

In 1942, the Institute of Labour Management defined the nature of its members work:

Personnel management is that part of management which is primarily concerned with the human relationships within an organisation. Its objective is the maintenance of these relationships on a basis which ....enables all those engaged in the undertaking to make their maximum personal contribution to the effective working of that undertaking.<sup>19</sup>

Although still referred to as the Institute of Labour Management, the definition speaks of 'personnel management', indicating that a shift had already taken place in the use of terminology, and thereby in the perception of the nature of the function performed. In 1942, Moxon, the Director of the Institute, confirmed this understanding when he listed the six categories of 'personnel management': Employment, Wages, Joint Consultation, Health and Safety, Employee Services and Welfare, Education and Training.

A special note on the Rowntree company is included due to its leadership role as a trendsetter of enlightened employment practices in the early 1900s in Great Britain . Part of that company's unique role may be found in the social studies the company undertook. Seebohm Rowntree, their first Labour Director, investigated the social and economic conditions of the wage earning classes in York. The first study in 1899 of 16362 families, was published as "Poverty: a Study of Town Life." The second study undertaken in 1936, was of 15252 households and published in book form in 1946 as

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<sup>18</sup> Niven, Personnel Management, pp.102 -107.

<sup>19</sup> Niven, Personnel Management, p.107.



“Poverty and Progress: a Second Social Survey of York.”<sup>20</sup> In 1937 Seebohm Rowntree wrote about his experiences and understanding of how to approach the needs of labour which he published as “The Human Needs of Labour.” This followed a similar book with the same title published in 1918, with the same purpose of explaining the importance of the first investigation. In the 1936 study Rowntree applied a “poverty line” to establish “what portion of the population was living in poverty.” This “poverty line” was applied to establish the standard of living attainable by a man, wife and three children, where the man had a wage of 53 shillings a week in the city area and 43s 6d per week in a rural area, after paying rent. This concept was the precursor of the more complex ‘poverty datum line’ and other similar concepts, applied in South Africa in the 1970s to enable a common measure to be used in establishing a minimum wage level.

The insights obtained from these studies gave the Rowntree Company the ability to make informed decisions when meeting their workers needs. The Rowntree philosophy is best explained by Seebohm Rowntree:

Throughout the world the workers are beginning to demand, with increasing insistence, that industry shall be conducted in the interests, not of a favoured few, but of the community as a whole. There is a desire on the part of a growing number of employers in this country that this ideal shall be realized. How much better that the demand should be conceded voluntarily rather than under compulsion.<sup>21</sup>

It is noted during this period that an intellectual influence in Great Britain supported communism as practiced in the Soviet Union as the hope of the working class. Rowntree family in contrast were renowned Quakers.

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<sup>20</sup> B S Rowntree, Poverty and Progress: A Second Social Survey Report (London: Longmans Green, 1946).

<sup>21</sup> B S Rowntree, The Human Needs of Labour (London: Longmans Green, 1937), p.13.



The pioneering employee relations practices at Rowntree illustrate the direction in which personnel management would develop in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1916 a Works Council system was established at the Rowntree factory where shop stewards participated ex officio. These councils were forerunners of participative management systems later introduced in industry in Great Britain. They were perceived as good models of “democratic government”. Their wage policy was based on a pay incentive scheme which was introduced after full debate with and acceptance by employees. It permitted reasonably high earnings for workers.

A study was commenced in 1929 , into “incentives, co-operation and contentment”. The investigating team included the Chief Shop and the findings reveal the leadership the Rowntree Company had achieved in progressive and participative management.<sup>22</sup> The study sought to establish the results of the Rowntree belief in the importance of the “human factor in industry as essential to industrial prosperity.” It reflects an organisation sensitive to the environment from which its employees were drawn and an employer in search of a balance between the requirements of a successful business and a careful assessment of employee needs . The Organisation Chart of the Rowntree Personnel Department shows the developed level of services provided by their personnel function.<sup>23</sup> By the 1970s many South African industries were still to introduce what Rowntree had achieved by the mid 1930s.

Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there emerged in Great Britain a number of seminal thinkers who would influence the future of industrial relations. Notable among these

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<sup>22</sup> The report was published in book form in 1938, a copy of which was found in the defunct LIRI library in Grahamstown in 2003. Patricia Hall and H W Locke, Incentives and Contentment (London: Pitman & Sons, 1938).

<sup>23</sup> C H Northcott, Personnel Management: Its Scope and Practice (London: Pittman Publishing, 1947). p. 7. See Appendix 2.1 for Organisation Chart.

were Sidney and Beatrice Webb. Their research and writings provided an intellectual rationale for trade unions.<sup>24</sup> Although the solutions offered by the Webbs to the problems of working people differed from that of internal organisational welfare, the objective was the same, to relieve the burden on disadvantaged workers.

The Webbs developed a theory of trade unionism and collective bargaining as rational strategies for dealing with the problems of unequal bargaining power between workers and employers. The importance of their contribution was determined, not only for its rationale for unionism as an essential means to furthering the worker cause, but also due to their thorough research. At another level, a leading industrial relations academic in the USA, suggests that the Webbs created a framework which challenged the arguments of both the classical economists, who shaped British labour policies and the marxist paradigm.<sup>25</sup>

Trade unionism had been in existence in Great Britain since 1851 with the formation of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. Such unions comprised largely skilled workers and by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century they were accepted in society. What emerged with the initiatives of the Webbs was a concept of a “new unionism” of “general unions” for the more unskilled general workers, for whom no adequate provision was previously available. These developments would revolutionise both British employment practice and labour politics. Personnel management found labour relations became more demanding as the unions won gains related to employee benefits. Industrial relations began to

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<sup>24</sup> The Webb's original study first published in 1897 and entitled Industrial Democracy is described by them as “a scientific analysis of Trade Unionism in the United Kingdom” (p.v). The study covers 929 pages of detailed examination of the topic. Their second book, first published in 1902 is called The History of Trade Unionism. Both are classic works of thorough investigation into the history and need for the trade union movement.

<sup>25</sup> Thomas A Kochan, Collective Bargaining and Industrial Relation (Holmwood, Ill:Irwin, 1980).

emerge as a specialist function. The development of “general unions” had great impact later in South African labour history.

Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Karl Marx developed his own alternative to classical economics, significantly in London. He, too, wanted to improve the position of workers, but with a radically different approach. In the long term he wanted, not to improve workers negotiating skills, but to overthrow capitalist society and introduce a classless society. Although marxism never achieved its objectives in Great Britain, Marx’s influence was significant and no understanding of the development of personnel/human resource management in Great Britain can be meaningfully made without recognising the pressure it created on the management of industrial relations. Marxist theory is important as it significantly influenced labour relations history in South Africa.

The historical developments in Great Britain greatly influenced the early direction of personnel management and industrial relations in South Africa. The close association between the two countries led to the inevitable flow of ideas. The growth of mining and later secondary industries, such as textiles and clothing, the involvement in two world wars, and notably the second, all hastened the process whereby the principles and practices of improved personnel management were implemented. It can be argued that the early developments in South Africa can not be adequately explained without reference to trends in Britain.

### **The Historical Background in the United States of America**

From the beginning of the 1900s industry in the USA was observed to have employed certain staff members called “social or welfare secretaries.” Their main function was, “to

study the welfare of the employees in every way, to suggest improvements in their condition, and to organise ..... various forms of improvement.”<sup>26</sup> However, by the 1920s, industrial welfare work was becoming discredited and although the term ‘welfare’ was vanishing the problems of dealing with workers remained. This led to the scope, rather than the essence of the work being altered. This newer demand emerged as “personnel administration”, whose function it was to create an improved system of employment management. The establishment in 1912 of the first employment management association in Boston, reflects the early signs of this trend. Employment management was reported to include, selection of employees, instruction, welfare and medical services.

In parallel with the above development a fresh factor emerged influencing the work place. Frederick Taylor, an engineer who started work as a labourer, developed a concept of industrial engineering later to be known as “scientific management.” This method transformed production management through the careful study of the best ways to have workers perform their operations. A prominent American academic explained that Taylor showed no interest in the personnel aspects of workers, only their industrial engineering contribution.<sup>27</sup> However, the impact of Taylor’s concept was that “Managers would never again overlook the human dimension.” The human aspect, however, was viewed by Taylor from the perspective of a production factor. In this sense, scientific management had important employee management implications for the future.

During this period at Harvard University, Munsterberg published his influential

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<sup>26</sup> Henry Eilbirt, “The Development of Personnel Management in the United States.” Harvard Business Review, 33,3 (1959), p.349.

<sup>27</sup> Arthur A Sloane, “Personnel/Human Resource Management in Contemporary Organizations”, In E C Schneier, R W Beatty and G M McElvoy, Personnel/Human Resource Management Today (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1986), pp.6-15.

“Psychology and Industrial Efficiency.”<sup>28</sup> His thinking became the forerunner of Industrial Psychology, which later would play a significant role in the development of personnel management in South Africa. Munsterberg referred to his approach as “scientific psychology.” From his studies in job analysis and the need to identify necessary skills to perform specific functions through aptitude testing devices, a whole new direction for personnel management was to arise. The application of these techniques was refined during the war years and potential job performance was improved, for example, through intelligence testing.

America’s entry into World War I (1914-18) in 1917, gave the now growing personnel function a new impetus. Labour shortages occurred due to men enlisting in the armed services and new demands emerged for a reduction in labour turnover. New workers needed to be trained to replace those joining the military effort. The gradual transition from welfare orientation to early forms of personnel management in the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century gained momentum. Functions, such as recruitment, training, reduction of absenteeism and labour turnover, became important employment issues requiring the attention of the emerging personnel specialist. Sloane maintains that despite the new demands on the personnel function, its status was not enhanced in the management hierarchy. He believed that this was due to the absence of commonly recognized professional standards and because the personnel function was often viewed with animosity by managers in other fields for seemingly having provided a haven from which naive do-gooders could infiltrate the organization. Sloane explained that “to employers ‘welfare capitalism’ was an idea whose time was gone” following the Great Depression of the 1930s.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> H Munsterberg., Psychology and Industrial Efficiency (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1913), p.52.

<sup>29</sup> Sloane, Personnel/Human Resource, p.9.



In contrast Henry Eilbirt's earlier assessment had been based on a view that the changes during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century had been of an altered attitude to the handling of workers which had gradually spread through all levels of management.<sup>30</sup> Eilbirt identified it as a concurrence between a new found regard for the 'humanity' of working class people imbued by the 'religious-philanthropic-welfare tradition' and the ongoing pursuit for efficiency. "The practice of tyranny in industry could be condemned as inhuman, anti-religious and undemocratic." He showed that the old form of handling labour was inefficient and that the sheer reliance on authority was no substitute for competence. He reasoned that, "Both idealism and realism, oddly enough, dictated that relations with labor be reviewed, humanized and individualized."

Eilbirt's research revealed how the power of the foreman gradually reduced due to their inability to adapt to more currently acceptable forms of control and that the personnel specialist was in the forefront of this process. It is significant that in the 1970s and 1980s, South African industry grappled with this transition in respect of white foreman. Personnel managers were again in the forefront of the animosity of the foreman, who saw their traditional power being eroded by new personnel policies and practices.

Eilbirt assessed the contribution of the emerging personnel function after the first two decades of the century. He noted that the pioneers in personnel management had devoted themselves to the cultivation of newer ideas about employees. But these ideas about people in work situations would only come to prominence in the course of the next quarter of a century. Eilbirt believed it was here the most significant contribution of the personnel movement in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century could be found

Following the Great Depression in the United States of America in the 1930s a new

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<sup>30</sup> Eilbirt, "Development", p.364.

challenge emerged represented by the growing power and demands of labour unions in relation to wages and conditions of employment. Competent specialists were required to deal with a new dynamic in labour affairs. Responsibility lay with the personnel function to and, with the advent of rampant unionism, one authority stated, “personnel was back in business.”<sup>31</sup> To be relevant to the new dynamics, labour relations centres were established for research into industrial relations at notable universities, such as, Michigan, Stanford, Wisconsin, Princeton, which added weight to their existing labour relations courses.

A number of important influences affecting personnel management during the 1930s can be identified.<sup>32</sup> First, welfarism had declined in effectiveness. Second, the scientific management of Taylor was no longer delivering its earlier productivity gains, partly because of its shortcomings in understanding and dealing with the social dynamics of the work environment. Third, the growing labour movement in the mid-1930s and onwards, began to apply pressure on employers to improve treatment, wages, benefits and working conditions.

These factors called for improved ways of dealing with employees. However, in the process it was discovered that some employers saw the rise of unionism as a challenge “to provide so sound a personnel programme that employees would not feel the need of a union”.<sup>33</sup>

The American entry into World War II (1939- 40) in 1941 led to a new acceptance of the

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<sup>31</sup> Sloane , Personnel/Human Resource , p.9.

<sup>32</sup> Beach, Management , p.19.

<sup>33</sup> Beach, Management , p.19



role of personnel specialists as they were increasingly called upon to provide important input into the war effort. The personnel function began to re-direct its efforts from labour relations to war requirements. Optimal manpower utilisation within organisations was called for. Selection and performance tests became of paramount importance and were developed or refined for the selection of army, navy and air force recruits. The pressures were not dissimilar to that at the time of World War I, except now more sophisticated methods were developed. A parallel development will be noted in South Africa.

Coupled with these testing and selection techniques, was the introduction of a more systematic method of training. The U S Wartime Manpower Commission developed the “Training Within Industry” (TWI) programme which emphasised the four steps of preparation, presentation, performance and follow-up. The methods applied were not new, but were packaged as a way of meeting the need of accommodating millions of inexperienced civilian newcomers to wartime production . It focussed on critical points in the job and helped supervisors to train nearly one third of the nations non- military labour force. It fell to the personnel function to direct these programmes in-company . The TWI programme was soon introduced into Great Britain and after the end of the war became a popular and effective training technique in South Africa.

The early developments in the USA, after a time lag, made their way into South Africa and will be identified later as influencing personnel management trends in this country.

### **The Rise of Scientific Management**

The emergence of scientific management was referred to briefly earlier in this chapter to place it in its historical context and is now dealt with in more detail to acknowledge its

significance for the employment relationship. Its impact on management and improved productivity in western manufacturing countries at the time and thereafter, is of such significance that it warrants special mention. Around 1885 in the United States of America, Frederick W Taylor (1856-1915) began to study work systematically using scientific methods. He believed a perfect fit could be achieved between person and job. This was to be attained by applying time and motion studies, use of standardised tools and method specification, linked with proper selection and placement of the right worker in the right job, exact training in the job, and properly supported by management in the spirit of co-operation. He perceived this method as being in the best interests of both worker and employer. He stated that at no stage should workers be called upon to perform at a pace which would be detrimental to their health. Employees should be shown that changes in the methods of their jobs could result in greater earnings for themselves.

Taylor published his findings in his pioneering “The Principles of Scientific Management” in 1911 and continued thereafter to refine his methods. Taylor’s overall goal was to eradicate excessive fatigue, wasted time and lost motion from the workplace by discovering and then implementing the “one best way” of performing a given operation. His methods were commonly referred to as ‘Taylorism’. Taylorism conformed to the concept of the ‘economic man’, which dominated motivational thinking at the time, namely, that people are primarily motivated by economic gain. His tomb bears the epitaph, “The Father of Scientific Management.”

Taylor had his critics at the time. Munsterberg, a contemporary, in assessing Taylor’s supporters and detractors called for some realism in assessing his contribution.<sup>34</sup> The “enthusiastic followers” he said, declare scientific management to be “the greatest

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<sup>34</sup> Munsterberg, Psychology, p.49.

advance since the introduction of the mill and machinery.” Munsterberg believed a “sober examination of the facts soon demonstrates that the truth lies in the middle.” A later evaluation in the USA by Kochan, maintained that scientific management was an effort “to blend economic incentives and industrial engineering techniques” to achieve the “one best way” for organising work.<sup>35</sup> Eilbirt in his research into of the personnel function in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the United States of America, suggests that the focus then on “personnel administration”, had its origin in the introduction of scientific management.<sup>36</sup> He found a fusion between certain elements of welfare work and scientific management, merged with some purely routine clerical functions which became known as ‘employment management’.

Scientific management is credited with having made a telling impact on how work was performed in industry, the efficiency of workers and their administration and by extension on personnel management. Sloane believed that, “personnel (management) is directly indebted for its existence (in the USA) to at least two 19<sup>th</sup> century United States developments: the advent of ‘scientific management’ and the coming into being of what was then called, unabashedly, the ‘welfare secretary’.”<sup>37</sup> Scientific management made its way into South Africa at first through the mining industry and then later into secondary industry as will be observed in the section dealing with historical developments in South Africa.

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<sup>35</sup> Kochan, Collective Bargaining, p.9.

<sup>36</sup> Eilbirt, “Development”, pp.64- 65.

<sup>37</sup> Sloane, Personnel/Human Resource, p.6.

## **The Human Relations Movement**

At the same time as scientific management was having an influence on industrial productivity, a new influence emerged in the 1920s and 1930s which played a significant role in the practice of personnel management for the following thirty or more years. The so called “Human Relations School” may be identified by its humanistic and individualistic focus in dealing with organisational and employment issues. It gave attention to individual social relations and the need to improve ways of dealing with employees. This movement may be interpreted as a reaction to the depersonalising elements in scientific management.

Most commentators identify the Hawthorne studies as the leading factor in launching the human relations movement. The findings of the lengthy Western Electric research at Hawthorne in the USA (1927-1932) under Elton Mayo and his Harvard University colleagues had a profound catalytic effect on understanding the social dynamics of people in a work situation. Kochan interpreted the emergence of the human relations school during this period as a reaction to the efforts of the early industrial psychologists who had focussed on the individual and neglected the social and human relations involved in a work environment.<sup>38</sup> Human relations theorists now stressed the importance of the work group.

The human relations movement effectively redefined motivation in the workplace from one based on the financial incentives of Taylorism, towards one based on human co-operation. Torrington and Hall referred to the personnel manager that emerged during this new period as a “humane bureaucrat” who operated within an organisational bureaucracy and attempted to blend the scientific management of Taylor with the human

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<sup>38</sup> Kochan, Collective Bargaining, p.11.

relations of Mayo.<sup>39</sup> Thus it may be observed that the new emphasis on the social implications of the work group was in contrast to Taylor's focus on the individual. It now fell to supervisors to treat workers as human beings and to create a sense of well being, team work and a feeling of belonging to the organisation.

The new forces which had been identified in work place relations began a process, where once more, the personnel function was called upon to realign its focus to include the emergence of a newer understanding of the dynamics of employment relations. It is this process of regularly having to realign its approach that became a characteristic feature of personnel/human resource management to the present time.

The human relations movement soon generated its critics. Legge in Great Britain, represented the cynical view that questioned the genuine humanitarianism of the new school, by suggesting that it was a convenient means of linking paternalistic welfare with a search for greater production efficiency.<sup>40</sup> She suggested that the human relations strategy was a form of management control through motivation.

Sloane in the U S A, drew attention to the unprecedented amount of government sponsored research which had occurred during World War II, into such personnel-related areas as formal and informal groups, motivation, morale, leadership, communication, technological change and productivity.<sup>41</sup> Interest in all these fields, first kindled years earlier by the pioneering industrial psychologists and sociologists, was stimulated to the point where it became, both widespread and seemingly, permanent. The Human

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<sup>39</sup> Torrington and Hall, Personnel Management, p.5.

<sup>40</sup> Karen Legge. Human Resource Management: Rhetoric and Realities (London: MacMillan, 1995), p.11.

<sup>41</sup> Sloane, Personnel/Human Resource, p.10.



Relations School benefitted from this input. Sloane summed up the period by commenting that, "Personnel was, in short, definitely a war profiteer." Personnel Management in South Africa grew similarly during the war years, as will be shown in this study.

### **The Historical Background in South Africa:**

During the period under investigation in this chapter, numerous major events took place in South Africa which set the agenda for the emerging personnel management function. During this time, as well, early personnel practice was strongly influenced by industrial experience overseas in improving productivity. Some of the most important of these factors are investigated.

The first identifiable personnel function undertaken on an organised scale, although not referred to as such, was that of the systematic recruitment of mine labour. With the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand, in the then Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) in 1886, large numbers of men were required to undertake the labour intensive mining operations. Unscrupulous freelance labour recruiters, called 'labour touts', exploited the situation to their own advantage by taking commissions for labour obtained for the mines. To overcome problems of labour recruitment, a centralised system of recruitment was established by the Chamber of Mines, which had been formed in 1889 by the mining companies. The Chamber of Mines main functions was to negotiate on behalf of mine owners with President Paul Kruger's ZAR government, on such issues as taxes, mining legislation, excessive customs and excise duties and to provide a means for mine owners to co-operate on other matters which needed joint action. To further stabilise labour supply, a central recruiting organisation, the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA) was founded in 1901, followed in 1912 by a further organisation, the Native

Recruiting Corporation (NRC). These two organisations merged in 1977 to form the Employment Bureau of Africa (TEBA).<sup>42</sup>

A further personnel related development, was the Native Labour Regulations Act (NLRA) No.15 (1911) which attempted to improve the conditions of African labour. The Act required, inter alia, that workers be paid in cash, that contracts be in writing and explained in the presence of a magistrate, and that compound managers be registered. The latter is of interest as compounds and compound managers ultimately became a personnel responsibility. The NLRA was the first Act to have what may be termed 'personnel' implications. Compound managers were labour controllers outside of the working environment and, over time, became the first providers of social services to African labour. The compound managers controlled the housing, feeding, discipline, entertainment and health facilities in the hostel system.

From a labour relations perspective, the first trade union was formed in the printing industry in the Cape in 1882. Artisan/skills based unions were formed as a result of the arrival of skilled workers with union experience in Great Britain or Australia. By nature of the emphasis in this study limited attention is given to union growth. Only the most significant events involving unions will be referred to. The events selected are those which may be interpreted as having influenced the direction of personnel management in the country.

In 1902 the skilled miners went on strike at the Village Main Reef Mine in Johannesburg

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<sup>42</sup> G C Mitchell, "From Paternalism to Participation: Evolving Techniques of Management Control in the South African Gold Mining Industry." Unpublished MSoc Sci thesis. University of Natal, 1992. He provides a useful summary of early personnel management development in the gold mining industry from his access to numerous documents available to him as a researcher with the Chamber of Mines Research Organization.



and in the same year the white S A Mine Workers Union was established. In 1915, the Transvaal Chamber of Mines recognised the S A Mine Workers Union to enable the Chamber, among other issues, to negotiate with a recognised body, especially in light of skilled labour shortages following men joining the army to fight in World War One. Reference Boards and Joint Boards were established for the same purpose in other industries, to assist in dealing with the growing dissatisfaction among African workers.

Following the miners strike in 1922, a move was made to create a more comprehensive legal institutionalisation of labour relations. The promulgation of the Industrial Conciliation Act (ICA) in 1924 provided a statutorily defined labour relations system which had long lasting impact on industrial relations in South Africa, not only because it introduced a compromise between compulsory arbitration and a voluntary industrial relations system, but because it excluded large sections of the workforce, such as public servants, railway workers and African employees. The ICA made Africans ineligible to join legally recognised trade unions.<sup>43</sup> Many years later this exclusion created mayhem for personnel managers in the 1970s and early 1980s, when they were tasked with resolving black labour unrest and strikes.<sup>44</sup> Webster's study on South African labour

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<sup>43</sup> African trade unions came into being, during the period of unrest during and after the First World War. Some unions, such as Clements Kadalie's Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa (ICU) founded in 1919, did attract large numbers of members, reported to have grown to around 100,000 by 1927. But these unions came to have no statutory standing in terms of the Industrial Conciliation Act. The ICU is of much interest in terms of the history of the development of trade unionism in South Africa, but it had little impact on company management at the time. Philip Bonner. "Decline and Fall of the ICU - A Case of Self-Destruction?" in Eddie Webster (ed), Essays in Southern African Labour History (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1978); pp.114 -120).

<sup>44</sup> For detailed chronology of labour history see Cunningham, P W. "History of South African Industrial Relations: 1809- 1978". Unpublished document - Advanced Executive Programme in Industrial Relations, University of Port Elizabeth. 1984. See also, Webster, Essays; Martheanne Finnemore. Introduction to Labour Relations in South Africa (Durban: Butterworths, 1996), pp 21-41, for an incisive review; Walter E Williams, South Africa's War Against Capitalism (Kenwyn: Juta, 1990), for the perspective of a black American researcher; Keith Jubber.(ed), Industrial Relations and Industrial Psychology (Cape Town: Juta, 1979), for an objective and more academic perspective prior to major

history, noted the importance of the ICA, which in the end, had serious knock-on effects on personnel management.<sup>45</sup> In the same study Lever noted that it was not only the genesis of the Act, but also its consequences that shaped later trade union activity and determined the parameters of collective bargaining in South Africa. The Act fixed the position of the various races in South Africa within the industrial system thereby entrenching problems for later years.

One researcher found that two other labour Acts introduced during the period 1924-1926, helped to make this a defining period in labour relations which affected the future direction in South African society as a whole.<sup>46</sup> The Wage Act (1925) was designed specifically as the back-up legislation for white or 'civilized labour', not covered by the ICA. It allowed the State to intervene and to act to protect the interests of unorganised 'civilized' labour by ensuring a 'civilized' wage for whites. The Mines and Works Amendment Act (1926), is described as the "fundamental job reservation Act in the history of all of South Africa's labour legislation." The Act provided for the protection of "that super-sensitive area of White labour, the mining industry, from further threats to the security and privilege of White workers" by ensuring that certain jobs were scheduled under the Act to be specifically reserved for occupation by whites.

These three Acts entrenched in legislation a uniquely South African phenomenon. Elsewhere, unionism was formulated on class conflict, but in South Africa by 1924, the division became a race divide, with white unionists generally associated with the white

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changes in SA trade history; Jeremy Baskin, Striking Back: A History of Cosatu (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1991), for a black trade union perspective.

<sup>45</sup> Jeff Lever, "Capital and Labour in South Africa: The Passage of the Industrial Conciliation Act, 1924", pp.82-107, in Webster, Essays.

<sup>46</sup> Kevin Williams, "Trade Unionism In South African History" in Jubber, Industrial Relations, p.71.

power elite, thereby protecting themselves against the encroachment of the black worker into a white exclusive zone. This system was further entrenched at the time of the Fusion Government with the enactment of Herzog's "Native" bills in 1936, which ironically, came at a time when economic development was promoting greater integration of the races.<sup>47</sup>

The interpretation and application of labour/worker/employee orientated legislation later became an area in which personnel practitioners would require special knowledge and understanding to cope with an ever increasing number of legal requirements imposed by the state. It was the application of this race based legislation which became a serious dilemma for future black personnel practitioners who had to apply the law to their own black people.

The legislated racial division entrenched in these three Acts had roots in earlier South African history. Since the 1890s successive governments had to give attention to growing "poor white" class whose condition had been exacerbated by events such as the discovery of diamonds and gold, the Boer War (1899-1902), and periodic droughts which forced farmers and 'bywoners' off the land.

Bottomley, a researcher into the early poor white problem, confirmed the significance of the "poor white" problem as a factor which determined the future political direction in South Africa.<sup>48</sup> By 1924 one quarter of all Afrikaners were classified in that category

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<sup>47</sup> Trewhella Cameron (Gen Ed), A New Illustrated History of South Africa (Johannesburg: Southern Book Publishers, 1991) p.256.

<sup>48</sup> J. Bottomley, "Public Policy and White Rural Poverty in South Africa: 1881 - 1924." Unpublished PhD dissertation, Queens University, Kingston Ontario, 1990, pp. ii and 4. Bottomley's study showed also that the problem had much earlier origins. ".....poverty had been present in the white community since settlement began at the Cape in 1652", p.13.

and the election of that year was labelled the “poor white election”. Bottomley found that in the period under his investigation, 1881 - 1924, “Poor whiteism was a direct consequence of the dominance of unskilled labour by black workers.” Bottomley argued in his thesis that it was the protection of white jobs which led to official apartheid and job reservation, where white’s alone were permitted to undertake certain jobs. Thus the labour issue, from the earliest years of industrial growth, became a fundamentally determining factor in the direction of South African politics. This overarching racial element in employment practice haunted HR practitioners for the rest of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

The resultant migration of poor whites, largely Afrikaners, from the countryside led the government in 1929 to establish the Carnegie Commission to investigate and report on the problem.<sup>49</sup> The Commission’s findings referred to the movement off the land as, “a migration ‘in search of something better’” by poor white displaced persons moving from rural to urban areas which produced a large under-class of ‘poor whites’, largely of Afrikaner origin. Successive governments acted to alleviate the situation. One method was to protect white jobs which may be seen from the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century where the racial division of labour occurred in the country’s most important industry, gold mining. Africans were excluded from skilled and supervisory work, and by 1907/8 the decision had effectively been taken to exclude whites from general unskilled work, thus confining their employment to skilled, supervisory and a small number of clearly defined less skilled categories.

But this separation was not always followed as many employers sought ways to employ cheaper black labour outside of the stipulated categories. However, the principle of

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<sup>49</sup> Report of the Carnegie Commission of Investigation of the Poor White Question in South Africa. The Poor White Problem in South Africa. 5 Vols. (Stellenbosch: Ecclesia Drukkery, 1932). The Commission reported on a study undertaken in 1929 and early 1930 into the so called “poor white” problem.

separation had been established and there followed an important connection between white politics and labour relations which would influence South African history until the Wiehahn and Riekert Commissions presented their reports in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The process would only reach finality with the democratic elections in 1994.

Whereas, the Carnegie Commission Report spelt out the parlous condition of the poor whites, poor Africans and other racial groups were not considered as problematic. Recommendations to alleviate the situation referred only to poor whites. The commission saw the need for work opportunities and welfare assistance for these whites, but there was no similar assistance envisioned for African people.

The Carnegie Report made no suggestion that employers could play a social responsibility role in assisting to alleviate the plight of poor whites. as became evident in the last three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when companies committed substantial resources to corporate social responsibility funding. The Railways and other state sponsored projects, however, were used to soak up many otherwise unemployable whites. The Findings and Recommendations of the Report made special reference to a category called “Mothers and Daughters of Poor Families”, calling for special attention by welfare, state and church agencies.<sup>50</sup> By the late 1930s, manufacturing industries employing women and girls, had begun introducing welfare programmes to assist these women. This assistance became part of recognised personnel management policy and practice. It is this group of women who in the early to mid 1940s received considerable research attention as revealed in the investigations undertaken and written up by Isobel White of the Leather Industries Research Institute (LIRI) and which is investigated later in this Chapter.

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<sup>50</sup> Carnegie Commission, Items 45 - 51, p.xv - xvi.



## Some Important Developments Influencing the Growth of Personnel Management

Important developments influencing the growth of personnel management may be found in the emergence of rudimentary personnel functions in the gold mines. The experience in gold mines is used to illustrate an embryonic personnel service due to the amount of research material available, which is not as accessible in other industries. In the gold mines the Compound Manager and his staff were the early performers of the personnel function.<sup>51</sup> The Compound Manager, who was “European”, was able to speak at least one African language and had experience underground. He was responsible for housing and feeding, welfare of workers, medical services, law and order, distribution of labour, and administration of one or more compounds. Reporting to him was a supervisor or Controller of ‘Natives’, who was the liaison between the underground manager and the compound manager. Reporting to the compound manager was an *induna* appointed by him, who was the communicating channel between workers and management. Reporting to the *induna* were the *izibonda*, the heads of the dormitories, elected by the residents in their area.

The *izibonda* were first appointed at mines as early as the 1920s and like the *izinduna* were an adaptation from their traditional background. The *izibonda* acted as liaison between management and African workers and as a form of ‘room prefect’ in their dormitories in mine hostels they provided a means of control. At monthly meetings they

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<sup>51</sup> J D Rheinallt Jones. “Adaptation of Personnel Management to Native Labour Problems on the Gold Mines”: Paper (28 pages) delivered by Rheinallt Jones, to the Johannesburg Branch of the IPM: 28 Sept. 1948. Private Papers: William Cullen Library. Rheinallt Jones was appointed the first Director of the South African Institute of Race in 1930 and had a broad exposure to race relations issues in South Africa. In 1947 he accepted an invitation from Ernest Oppenheimer to become Adviser on Native Affairs to the Anglo American Corporation. It was as controversial a decision as that of Harry Oppenheimer in 1973 when he appointed Dr Alex Boraine, the President of the Methodist Church of SA, as Industrial Relations Consultant to Anglo American.

reported on hostel complaints, quality of food, hot water and so on. The reporting included, work situation issues, such as shortage of tools and job opportunities. Management in turn reported on safety, work team spirit, wage increases and appealed to *izibonda* to help curb absenteeism and loafing off the job. The *izibonda* did not play a policing role as that was the function of paid hostel police who reported to the *induna*, who in turn reported to the white Compound Manager. Mitchell's research showed that the *izibonda* system in the 1970s and 1980s ultimately became incorporated into a more formal "liaison" process as part of a broader system of consultation introduced by the newly established Industrial Relations Departments in the gold mines. The introduction of *izibonda* in mine hostels was an attempt to find an acceptable African way of allowing for improved communication.<sup>52</sup> Walter Sisulu's biographer, reports on his experience of living in a mine hostel in 1929 at the Rose Deep Mine, near Germiston<sup>53</sup> It provides insight into his perception of the working and living conditions at a mine. No mention is made of *izibonda* or *izinduna*, but of the informal role the older men played, for instance, in looking after the money of the younger men and advising them on the pitfalls of urban life. Nzimande interpreted the role of the *izibonda* and *izinduna* as forerunners of the African Personnel Officer.<sup>54</sup>

During the 1930s and early 1940s a further development in early personnel practice took place with the employment of female welfare workers in certain industries, particularly clothing and footwear, which engaged females predominantly. White's research in the Eastern Cape in the early 1940s, explains the role of these, by then, well established

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<sup>52</sup> Mitchell, "Paternalism".

<sup>53</sup> Elinor Sisulu, Walter Sisulu. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), pp.40-43.

<sup>54</sup> Nzimande, "Corporate Guerillas", pp.120 - 188.



welfare workers.<sup>55</sup> The current research was unable to identify a company which had already appointed a personnel specialist and to uncover his/her job description. Nor could any record be found which company in South Africa was the first to appoint a personnel manager.

The gradual application of scientific management techniques in gold mining had an important influence on the emergence of personnel management. The principles of scientific management made their way into South Africa from 1910 onwards via the mines, where efforts to optimise the productivity of the largely black work force became an important development. Leger's detailed analysis of the rise and effects of scientific management in South African gold mining is the most extensive historical study available on the subject.<sup>56</sup>

The research shows that mine managers from 1914 onwards were actively trying out new ways to improve productivity. The weakness of the analysis is that it narrows the interpretation of Taylor's techniques to piece work methods and wage incentives for African workers, which is not an adequate understanding of scientific management. During the 1930s and 1940s the mines introduced "Method Study" departments which concentrated on improving the efficiency of African workers. Another prominent researcher traced the role of management in mining and found that J S Ford, an eminent mining engineer, had actively applied scientific management principles in the 1930s and 1940s. to the extent where he was referred to as the "pioneer of scientific management in

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<sup>55</sup> White, Personnel Research, 1946.

<sup>56</sup> J P Leger, "Scientific Management and Skill in South African Gold Mining." Unpublished research paper. Sociology of Work Programme. University of Witwatersrand. 1993, pp.1- 39.

South Africa.”<sup>57</sup> Ford was quoted as saying that, “By reason of the particular type of native labour available, the gold mines should lend themselves more to scientific management than do the industries of Europe and America.” While at the New State Areas Mine in the mid 1930s, Ford arranged for standardised instructions to be implemented, following proper work study exercises, with set standards to be followed. His 526 page book, *Underground Management*, is a compilation of work instructions which attempted to cover every aspect of work. Leger showed that a fundamental weakness was that Ford omitted to take the worker into account in the process of productivity. It was at this stage that the emerging personnel specialists began to be heard speaking of the ‘human factor’ in production.

There was little worker opposition to these productivity innovations at the time. It was not until the late 1970s that the Taylor/scientific management critics were heard. Bozzoli, Webster, Nzimande and Leger, represented the academic voice of the new labour movement which illustrated new forces leading the an attack on the ruling ‘managerial ideology’, which resulted in companies being faced with new challenges to their earlier freedom to decide. Personnel Managers, in turn, were expected to provide new insights and guidance to their companies in face of the new challenges.

The role of the early industrial psychologists became another significant factor bringing personnel management into prominence in South Africa. This trend followed that of their overseas counterparts in studying working conditions, such as heat, noise, humidity and resultant fatigue and similar detrimental outcomes on worker productivity. Their research went on to include identifying necessary skills to perform specific

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<sup>57</sup> Belinda Bozzoli. “Managerialism and the Mode of Production in South Africa.” *S A Labour Bulletin*, 3, 8 (1977), pp. 6- 48. Her research in the late 1970s into the introduction of scientific management into the gold mines in South Africa in the 1930s and onwards, seems to have been the source of the criticism of scientific management in South Africa. in the early 1980s.

functions and the use of aptitude testing devices which brought a whole new direction for personnel management. The research work of Isobel White in applying industrial psychology techniques at the Leather Industries Research Institute (LIRI) in Grahamstown is a notable illustration of this trend.<sup>58</sup> Her book of original personnel related research findings and an introduction to personnel management and welfare work in factories, is the best available exposition of the practical application of industrial psychology at the time and is the first publication of its kind in South Africa.

An even bigger call for the services of industrial psychology came with South Africa's entry into World War Two. As in Great Britain and America, testing and selection of specialist military personnel became of paramount importance. Simon Biesheuvel, who had begun to make a name for himself as an outstanding research psychologist, with a PhD from the University of Edinburgh and then lecturing at University of Witwatersrand, was invited to form a special test unit within the S A Air Force with the task of selecting trainee aircrews and classifying them for different kinds of operation duties. The Aptitude Test Section, as it was named, expanded to include all aspects of care and efficiency of flying personnel, including training, flying accidents, morale, psychological breakdown and aviation medical problems. Under Biesheuvel, a psychologist who used both pure psychology and industrial psychological techniques in his work, expanded the work of the Section into a whole new field of personnel related research in South Africa.<sup>59</sup> Testing and selection became an integral part of the growing importance of personnel management.

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<sup>58</sup> White, Personnel Research.

<sup>59</sup> John Verster, Biesheuvel's son-in-law, has written an insightful resume of the vast contribution of a man recognised for his massive intellect and diverse interests. J M Verster. "Simon Biesheuvel (1908-1991)." S A Journal of Psychology, 21, 4 (1991), pp.267-270.. The tribute, unfortunately, does not attend to some of Biesheuvel's limitations. Biesheuvel's considerable collection of papers is housed in the Witwatersrand University Archives.

## **Isobel White's Early Role in the Development of Personnel Management**

The contribution of Isobel White to the development of the professionalisation of personnel management will be detailed, as she played a catalytic role in the 1940s.<sup>60</sup>

Isobel White (1909-1999) was born in Scotland where she went on to earn an MA at University of St Andrews in 1930, after being awarded a scholarship for being best student in her first year. She continued her studies with a three year Diploma in Social Work at the University of Edinburgh and extended her qualifications with a special certificate in Machine Drawing, which included courses in the Theory of Engines, Factory Layout and Drawings, and Workshop Practice. A four year spell as a Personnel Officer in Aberdeen ended when she married in 1936 and went to live in Leeds, where she spent a further two years inaugurating a personnel department for W Prentice and Company. Thereafter, a range of jobs followed, which included fieldwork for the National Institute of Industrial Psychology, a training assignment and a cost of living index setting exercise. These credentials help to understand the contribution she ultimately made in furthering the professionalisation of personnel management in South Africa

In 1939 she arrived with her two children in Grahamstown, where her husband, Professor K D White had been appointed to the Chair of Classics at the then University College of Rhodes. Her record of events that followed illustrate a number of important

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<sup>60</sup> The material is found in five main sources all of which are in the researcher's possession. (i) her curriculum vitae of seven pages; (ii) an eight page hand written account of events around her personnel related activities in South Africa, dated August 1985 titled "Development of Personnel Management in South Africa"; (iii) an eight page undated hand written document titled "History of Personnel Management Institute (Southern Africa) from 1945- September 1960"; (iv) a six hour taped interview with her recorded by Ian Crowther in November 1993; (v) an interview with White by the researcher, 5/11/1999.

features about the development of personnel management in South Africa at the time.

Her first impression of Grahamstown was not promising as she felt it was small and would not provide her with the opportunity to become involved in her field in industry or commerce. "In any case, Grahamstown did not approve working wives and showed me this in no uncertain fashion at a later date!"<sup>61</sup> Undaunted she studied the university calendar to find that the B.Com degree had a small section devoted to Industrial Psychology. She offered to lecture free and Professor Liddell, gave her six lectures towards the end of 1940, which was repeated the following year.

The university had been involved for a number of years in tanning and leather research under Professor Barker in the Chemistry department. The advent of World War Two and a greater need for assistance to the leather and footwear industry resulted in Rhodes establishing the Leather Industries Research Institute (LIRI) in 1941 under the leadership of Dr S G Shuttleworth, with funding partly from the government and partly from industry. He soon found that footwear and leather goods manufacturers did not only require technical guidance, but also methods to improve productivity and the personnel aspect of their businesses. White was approached to undertake some personnel related research in seven footwear factories in Port Elizabeth. In January 1942 she was appointed Assistant Research Officer at LIRI to continue the research she had begun. She described the post as "the lowest form of life", indicating her belief that she was capable of more senior work. This appointment was taken up after the birth of her third child in December 1941, which revealed her desire to get on with her career.

By this time she had already had two articles published on "Selecting Employees for

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<sup>61</sup> White, handwritten notes, 1985.

Maximum Efficiency”, which were also later published by LIRI. These articles reveal both her capacity and energy to get things done, as well as the orientation of her early work which in turn reflects the needs of the day. She saw these contributions as “clearly all this was pioneering work”, indicating her perception of the work she was undertaking.

Her attitude to trade unions is noteworthy. “Before I took up my appointment I was insistent that the Footwear and Leather Workers Trade Union should also approve this research project.” She achieved this, because she records that the union made an annual donation to the project and in turn received all annual reports, bulletins and recommendations emerging from her work. Her experience in Great Britain had shown her the value of obtaining trade union support for such research.

The Rhodes Senate minutes record, prior to the birth of her third child, that she was appointed to “assist Dr Krige in practical social work” and “to be paid for 20 lectures at £1.1.0 per lecture”, and would further assist with “other practical social work organisation for students (excluding work among natives).”<sup>62</sup>

Through her research activities in the Port Elizabeth area, she soon identified the need for the appointment of what she referred to as “trained general personnel managers, especially amongst women recruits”. In some larger and well established industries such appointments had already been made. She believed that if she could persuade enough factories of the need for such appointments, she could propose a course for the training of personnel managers at Rhodes. Among those she approached was a certain Brigadier Hanson, with the suggestion that the military make such appointments, indicating the breadth of her vision. Two years later Rhodes became the first tertiary institution in

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<sup>62</sup> University College of Rhodes. Senate Minutes. 10/11/1941, Vol 5, pp.297-298. Cory Library Archives.



South Africa to introduce a post-graduate diploma in Personnel Management.

In the meantime she had persuaded the Department of Psychology under Professor E H Wild, to develop aptitude tests for certain categories of operatives. She herself worked on developing tests for other operatives to assist with better recruitment methods. At the same time her interest in improving the working environment and the general welfare of employees led her to form a Factory Welfare Board to which representatives were invited from footwear manufacturers, Red Cross, Factory Inspectors and Child Welfare in the Port Elizabeth area. Again, this initiative reflects her recognition of the breadth of scope covered by her concept of personnel management.

In her research at LIRI she worked on methods of reducing absenteeism and labour turnover by having these figures recorded, which she then analysed, interpreted and reported on to management and the trade union. In 1943 these findings were used as evidence in the Gluckman Commission on "Health Services". She had articles on these findings published in various journals, where she described the nature and importance of this kind of research in the interests of industry and used the opportunity to press her recommendation of the need for the appointment of personnel managers.

A further recognition of her rising stature arrived when she was invited to become a member of the Advisory Council for Labour by the then Minister, the Hon Mr Eric Walker. This council consisted of members drawn from trade unions, employers, government and "a few specialists like myself". This body advised on proposed legislation before it reached parliament and directed attention to areas requiring legislation. She maintained that participation in this body gave her the opportunity to promote personnel research and personnel management. This resulted in the appointment

of personnel officers being discussed in the House of Assembly.<sup>63</sup>

By early 1943 White proposed a personnel management course at Rhodes. "I felt that there was sufficient demand for personnel managers and awareness of what personnel management was, to put forward to Rhodes a proposal for training personnel managers."<sup>64</sup> Professors Shuttleworth (LIRI, Wild (Psychology) and Irving (Sociology) advocated the proposal and it was approved by the University Senate and later the University Council. The Social Science Committee of the Senate on 3 September 1943, at which she was present, approved the course.<sup>65</sup> The same details are found in her book.<sup>66</sup> The decision gave South Africa its first tertiary education in personnel management. The Senate on 3 November 1943 approved the Diploma Course in Welfare and Personnel Management together with a special short course for immediate implementation.<sup>67</sup> The decision gave South Africa its first tertiary education programme in personnel management. The minutes also state that Mrs White was appointed "part-time lecturer in Personnel Management and be responsible for the practical work in the Diploma course." Full information on the new course is provided as an appendix due to its historical importance for professionalisation in South Africa.

The structure of the Diploma reflects the perceived needs of the time and also the

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<sup>63</sup> Union of South Africa. Hansard. "Registration of Employment Bill", 12 Apr. 1945, 5222 - 5240.

<sup>64</sup> White, hand written notes, 1985.

<sup>65</sup> University College of Rhodes: Senate Minutes: 3/9/1943. Cory Library Archives. Due to its historic significance the minute is included as Appendix 2.2.

<sup>66</sup> White, Personnel Research, pp.316 - 318.

<sup>67</sup> University College of Rhodes: Senate Minutes: 3/11/1943. Cory Library Archives: The details of the course provided in the minute is copied and found in Appendix 2.3.

influence of White's own disciplines. The curriculum clearly directed its focus at industry as the prime area of need, as identified by White in her work. The strong presence of welfare interests indicate the ongoing role of welfare workers in industry and their need for a broader exposure to personnel management disciplines. White foresaw a greater role for women personnel managers and in this sense was well ahead of her day.

The requirement for practical work is a recognition that personnel work is not merely an academic study. A graduate with practical exposure was a more marketable product than someone with no experience. In terms of professional development the practical training requirement was an important component

White had lobbied for the introduction of the Diploma in the belief that it would allow for greater professional specialisation of personnel practitioners, which would result in greater acceptance of their contribution. White is appropriately credited for her pioneering work as she drove the initiative in South Africa towards a soundly based professional service from personnel practitioners. From this perspective, she can be seen to be the first person to produce concrete ways of achieving this goal.

White's work in the Personnel Research Section at LIRI and Rhodes continued to expand during 1943 and 1944. LIRI called on her to visit "every footwear factory, tannery and leather goods manufacturer in South Africa and the Council called for these visits on an annual basis." She continued to write and publish in a variety of journals, aspects of her work, as well as addressing various groups around the country. It became obvious that additional qualified staff was required at LIRI which led to qualified psychologists being employed to carry out research on matters which dealt with personnel related issues and matters of efficiency. Her work and travels brought her into contact with a wide range of

players in business and industry.<sup>68</sup> These contacts provided her with a unique insight into the problems of industry and its need for competent personnel specialists. The war years created large shortages of trained people to undertake productive work and most industries were anxious to train staff and increase efficiency, which led to a growing call for the kind of services which White and LIRI could offer. The needs she encountered in industry led her in 1943 into a further area of training by organising a course for supervisors and foremen for the Certificate of the Institute of Administration, London, for which she was responsible for the lectures on Personnel and Motion Study.

As a reward for her achievements she was elected a Fellow of the Institute of Labour Management in Great Britain in 1943 for, as the Institute put it, her “pioneering work in South Africa.”<sup>69</sup> This honour in a period of just over three years is a remarkable achievement.

### Concluding Comments

The chapter has attempted to present salient events up to 1944, which may be observed as commencing the process of professionalisation of human resource management in South Africa. Although the socio-political-economic context in South Africa was different from that of Great Britain and the United States of America, personnel management became heavily influenced by the major movements of the time in those countries. The welfare origins are common, as is the influence of scientific management and the human relations school. The spread of ideas and methods from these dominant countries had their impact on South African thinking and practice in a relatively short space of time. The process

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<sup>68</sup> White, hand written notes.

<sup>69</sup> White, curriculum vitae.

speeded up in each case by the advent of two world wars in which South Africa participated. The notable difference is that South Africa during the 20<sup>th</sup> century became a seriously polarised racial society, which afflicted every aspect of life, not least the application of personnel management.

The first signs of the process of professionalisation are observed to emerge with the growing recognition of an identifiable personnel management occupation and the first tertiary education course to train personnel managers.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE EARLY PHASES OF PROFESSIONALISATION: 1945 - 1972**

This chapter will address first the key background events influencing the future direction of personnel management and then investigate the founding of the Institute of Personnel Management, the developments influencing the professionalisation of personnel practice and the establishment of an association to represent black personnel practitioners. It will take South Africa to verge of major changes in social and labour affairs in the early 1970s.

#### **Background to the Period**

The post-war period saw the decline of the J C Smut's wartime government, largely brought about by the growing concerns of whites over black urbanisation and liberalising tendencies of the government in the war years. Threatened whites and especially Afrikaners saw security in D F Malan's proposed apartheid policies.

World War Two and its aftermath, contributed to the growth of secondary industry in South Africa, which required a more skilled, stable, and productive work force, with lower job turnover and reduced absenteeism. For industrial growth to be sustained the economy required a more sophisticated structuring of the labour force. In contrast to mining, with its migrant hostel dwellers, industry's need for a more permanent workforce entailed the provision of adequate housing and other services for workers and their families. This scenario confronted the state with two possible options. The first, to provide a settled labour force in the urban areas, allowing certain rights to African workers such as controlled trade union activity, without conceding too much on the principle of separation. The other option, called for stemming the flow of Africans into



the cities by various influx control measures, control of labour relations through internal company mechanism, but not African trade unions, re-directing labour to white farms, the development of the 'reserves', and other measures. The latter approach became government policy, when the National Party took power in 1948.

The government felt threatened by trade union and other oppositional community activities of the S A Communist Party and banned it in 1950 under the Suppression of Communism Act (No 44) (The Internal Security Act). This did not contain the increase in the 1950s of black protests, for instance, against the pass laws. Black trade unions activity grew, led by the South African Congress Trade Unions ( SACTU), a federation of black trade unions, who became involved in protest actions.<sup>1</sup> For example, in 1957 they called on workers for a one day stay at home in support of a demand for a 'one pound a day minimum wage'.

The 1960s were politically momentous, commencing in 1960 with the speech of the British Prime Minister in the Parliament on the "winds of change" in Africa, the Sharpeville massacre of anti-pass protestors and the banning of the ANC and the PAC under the Unlawful Organizations Act . In 1961 came the Declaration of the Republic of South Africa, and in 1962, the passing of the General Law Amendment Act (No 76) (The Sabotage Act), and the Terrorism Act (No 83) in 1967. The assassination of Dr Verwoerd in Parliament in 1966 resulted in further stringent measures under John Vorster, the new Prime Minister.

The government policy of suppression of resistance during this period was characterised by bannings, shootings, censorship, detention, intensification of the application of pass

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<sup>1</sup> SAIPM, letter to the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions, Pretoria from the IPM. IPM Minute files, 13/1/1964, Reference 27.

laws, influx control, and suppression of mass organisations. For the black community, the 1960s have been referred to as the “dark decade.”<sup>2</sup> Government action brought growing white support for the National Party, a near disappearance of leftist politics and a growth of rightist movements, for example, the formation of the Herstigte Nasionale Party (HNP) in 1969. The end of the decade brought the establishment of the black SA Students Organisation (SASO) in a breakaway from the National Union of Students of South Africa (NUSAS), which led to a crystallising of the ideas of the black consciousness movement.<sup>3</sup>

Differences emerged in the 1950s between government ideology and industry’s needs for more skilled workers. But by the 1960s government and industry were supporting the flow of skilled immigrants from Great Britain and Europe as a ready made solution to skills shortages.<sup>4</sup> Many of these new workers soon accepted the government’s racial separation policies and enjoyed the benefits conferred on the white society. Following the protests and strikes during this time organisations, such as, the Federated Chamber of Industries (FCI), urged government to institute changes which would allow some form of African trade union recognition, simplification of the pass laws (but not removal) and streamlining of influx control. Little came of these appeals. Personnel managers accepted that it was their function to apply the relevant government legislation, for example, the proper registration of workers in terms of pass laws and influx control.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Baskin, Striking Back, p.16.

<sup>3</sup> Cunningham, “History”.

<sup>4</sup> M Horrell (compiler), A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa 1963. (Johannesburg:SAIRR,1964), Similar reports appeared in the annual SAIRR surveys for 1964-1966.

<sup>5</sup> Walter E Williams, South Africa’s War Against Capitalism (Kenwyn: Juta & Co,1990), pp.96-103.

## **The Founding of the Institute of Personnel Management in South Africa**

The launch of the first branch of the Institute of Personnel Management (IPM) in South Africa in Port Elizabeth in August 1945, owes its founding to another initiative by Isobel White. She had learned that the first students from the Rhodes Diploma in 1944 were “feeling isolated” and needed support in their careers. At the same time she became aware that other practitioners in the Port Elizabeth area had a similar need. She proposed the establishment of a branch of the British Institute of Personnel Management in Port Elizabeth.<sup>6</sup> She believed personnel people needed: (i) To meet to share ideas and to obtain new knowledge: (ii) To provide each other with mutual support as a means of improving skill and confidence in a new and growing field. These needs, White argued, could be met best through membership of the IPM and would in addition provide status to its members. She arranged support for the Port Elizabeth branch, which she saw as being a move in professionalising personnel management in South Africa. White believed that if they could prove parity of entrance requirements with British standards it would allow them to become a branch of the British Institute and in so doing enhance a claim to professional status.<sup>7</sup> She arranged with the British IPM to receive details of the Rhodes course and the proposed constitution for the local branch. At the start, there were about twenty members, mostly from leading companies, such as General Motors, Ford and Firestone. Those attending included names such as, Brian Mattison, who became national president of the IPM in 1969, a Dr Wolff from General Motors, a Miss Tudhope and a Miss Anne Cole-Page from Pyott who were female welfare officers. White became the first Chairman of the branch.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> White's hand written notes.

<sup>7</sup> White, letter to the researcher, 5/4/98.

<sup>8</sup> White's hand written notes.

The early developments in personnel management in South Africa benefitted from White's first hand experience and membership of the British IPM.<sup>9</sup> She believed the link with Great Britain was important to ensure the highest standards of personnel practice were introduced from the start, and that in South Africa, practitioners should be seen to be equally professional when compared to their British counterparts. "I wanted to use the same standards and conditions and did not want it to be seen to be inferior, colonial or South African."<sup>10</sup> Her knowledge of how to set about running such a body was important for its future success. The time was ripe for the launch of an organisation, but it needed the drive and insight that she brought. She later took much pride in the success of her initiative.

For White and Grahamstown members of the Port Elizabeth branch, attendance at monthly IPM evening meetings in Port Elizabeth required commitment, as it involved a round trip of 270 kms. White became the driving force, actively recruiting new members and encouraging existing members, to the extent of phoning around to urge them to attend meetings. These meetings took place in plain halls, with no drinks and only tea or coffee at the conclusion.

Herb Humphreys, later to become a President of the IPM in South Africa, recalled his experience of White's enthusiasm for the IPM. He had been sent by the Shell Oil Company from Durban to Port Elizabeth in 1954 to establish their Eastern Cape Personnel function, after only six months of Head Office personnel training. A chance meeting with

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<sup>9</sup> At the time it was still the Institute of Labour Management, but was about to change its name to the Institute of Personnel Management. The name IPM is used for the sake of simplicity as that was the name which White used.

<sup>10</sup> White, taped interview with Ian Crowther, 2/11/1993, in the researcher's possession. Crowther was a prominent HR practitioner and a long standing member of the IPM Editorial Committee who initially set out to write the history of the IPM, but later withdrew from the project.



White and exposure to her enthusiasm, led him to join the Branch. "To some of the oldies, Mrs White will be recalled as something of a doyen of Personnel Management. In no time I found myself on the committee." He testified to the value of that early association with a well established and organised branch and confirmed the validity of White's original guiding principles. Humphreys noted that the value of that association, especially in those early days of personnel management, added a distinct benefit to his contribution to his company. "She was a great believer in sharing experiences and not being in competition with each other."<sup>11</sup> Those early networking relationships became long lasting. The IPM from the start began to meet some of the requirements of a professional organisation by meeting specific developmental needs of its members.

White envisaged independent IPM branches in the main centres of the country, each of which she intended would be affiliated to the British IPM. This affiliation would provide the necessary status to the branches as an important step to developing professional practitioners.<sup>12</sup> White used her research visits to Johannesburg in 1946, together with her range of social contacts to discuss with personnel practitioners in the city the establishment of a Johannesburg branch of the IPM. She called a meeting of interested persons early in 1946 where it was decided to form a branch. She persuaded Dr Francis 'Pinky' Hill,

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<sup>11</sup> Two interviews by the researcher with Humphreys in May 1998, prior to his death in October 1998. See also, an unpublished "*A Profile of Herb Humphreys*" (1998) and an *Obituary* written by the researcher and published in *People Dynamics*, January 1999. Also, Humphreys, letter to the Editor, Indaba, IPM Natal Coastal Branch newsletter, 30/9/1996. Humphreys later returned to Durban and became the Personnel Director of the SAPREF Oil Refinery. In 1967, he became the first Natal based National President of the IPM and continued a long association with the Natal Branch until his death..

<sup>12</sup> This latter exposure reveals the influence American personnel management techniques were beginning to have in South Africa. White's hand written notes. Dick Sutton, later a prominent member of the IPM and three times President states, "For White, IPM was a concept not an organisation. That is why in those early days she did not see it as a cohesive body, but as independent, isolated branches in Port Elizabeth, Natal, Johannesburg and Cape Town." Interview with Sutton by researcher. This latter exposure reveals the influence American personnel management techniques were beginning to have in South Africa, 13/10/1998.

whom she had previously met, to stand as Chairman and in June 1946, the Johannesburg branch was established. The committee included, Errol Drummond, who later became the Executive Director of the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of South Africa (SEIFSA) and Natalie Lester, who established one of the first Employment Agencies in Johannesburg, and played a prominent role in the branch for many years and later went on to become president of the branch.

The identification of Hill as the person to head the new branch was unusual. He was a distinguished academic and an eminent mining engineer. Hill held a mining degree from the University of Witwatersrand, was a Rhodes scholar at Oxford in law and English literature, and had undertaken further studies in Industrial Engineering and Personnel Management in the United States of America.<sup>13</sup>

In 1944 he had become a member of the Council of the University of Witwatersrand.<sup>14</sup> As a mining engineer, he was ahead of his time, both technically as an engineer and in his awareness of the value of the 'people' factor in mining. He was also a pioneer in promoting research into the effects of heat and humidity on the health, safety and productivity of miners. In 1945 he became General Manager of the Durban Roodepoort Deep Mine, where he established the first personnel department on a mine in South Africa. The leadership of the IPM in Johannesburg, by a line manager was unusual and inspiring. It provided a credibility in management circles for the fledgling institute, which it would not have been able to achieve otherwise. In 1959, Hill became the President of the then

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<sup>13</sup> Dr F G Hill: Documents and Papers, Archives Department, University of Witwatersrand. Also, J Lang, Probing the Frontiers: The Story of Pinkie Hill, Johannesburg, Jonathan Ball, 1990. The more common usage is "Pinky". The nickname 'pinkie' arose from his short stature.

<sup>14</sup> In 1972 he became the Chairman of the Council from which position he retired in 1987.



very active Transvaal branch.<sup>15</sup>

Hill's leadership initiative was revealed in the first ever five day seminar on Personnel Management for Mine Managers, which he organised with White's assistance. White records that organising this seminar for hardened mine managers was a terrifying experience as she had never undertaken something at this level. She shared the lectures and discussions with Professors Wild (Psychology) and Irving (Sociology) from Rhodes. The significance of the seminar lies, not only in the introduction of personnel management to line managers, but the recognition that personnel management was a function of line management, supported by specialist personnel managers.

Hill's understanding of personnel management, contained in an article he wrote on the subject in 1946, reveals how personnel management was perceived by a leading thinker at the time. He stated that "In essence, personnel management is the personnel function of management." For him managing people was a line function, human relationships were "of supreme importance" and clearly defined policies were needed "aimed at promoting the well-being of all employees."<sup>16</sup> Personnel specialists, both men and women, required the necessary "temperament, training and experience to bring intelligence to bear on human problems." This theme was repeated by Hill many times in articles and public addresses over the years where his vision placed importance on human relationships, the well being of employees, and appointment of personnel specialists. (Whether he envisaged women down mines is not clear). The influence of the human relations school in the USA is evident in his understanding.

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<sup>15</sup> In 1987 the IPM conferred on him its highest accolade, that of Honorary Fellow and Life Member, in recognition of his remarkable contribution to the development and professionalisation of personnel management in South Africa

<sup>16</sup> Personnel Management, 1, 2 (1946), p.1-2.

Reinald Hofmeyer, a university graduate with wartime experience, but little knowledge of personnel management, was recommended by Hill to become the first personnel manager on a gold mine. In 1945 Hofmeyer was appointed to the Durban Roodepoort Deep Gold Mine and sent to Rhodes University to do a six month Personnel Management Diploma. On his return he was given orientation exposure to every department on the mine, including 110 shifts underground.<sup>17</sup> His appointment met a long standing plan by Hill to develop a strong personnel function on the mines. Hofmeyer went on to play an active role in the IPM.<sup>18</sup>

The development of new gold mines during the 1950s resulted in the establishment of fifteen new personnel departments and by 1968, there were thirty nine personnel departments.<sup>19</sup> Hill played a major part in guiding the establishment of these departments.<sup>20</sup>

During these early years of growing demand for personnel managers there was a shortage of qualified people. Some companies took bold decisions to meet the need. For example, White records two pioneering appointments of personnel managers in Johannesburg.<sup>21</sup> The illustration of Reinald Hofmeyer was one. Natalie Lester who later played a leadership

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<sup>17</sup> J. Lang, Probing the Frontiers, pp.52 -55.

<sup>18</sup> In 1961 Hofmeyer became President of the Transvaal Branch and in 1971, he was elected National President of the IPM.

<sup>19</sup> V R M Bebb. "The Development and Evaluation of an Open Learning Correspondence Programme for the Personnel Profession." Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Witwatersrand, 1978. p.17. Bebb became the IPM Education Director in 1971.

<sup>20</sup> His concern for the development of well rounded management knowledge and skills later led him, together with Professor Richards, to play a leading role in the establishment of the University of Witwatersrand's School of Business Administration.

<sup>21</sup> White, hand written notes.

role in the IPM Johannesburg Branch, was another. Appointed to the newly created position of personnel manager with the Mayfair Manufacturing Company, a textile company, she admitted to knowing little of what was required and asked White for help. "All I could do was to go through with her one Sunday the functions of the Personnel Department, and then, whenever I was in Johannesburg, to visit her and discuss problems." Lester went on to become the first woman President of the IPM's Transvaal Branch in 1963. Herb Humphreys was a further illustration of selecting and developing talent in a scarce market.

The launch in July 1946 of *Personnel Management*, the Quarterly Journal of the IPM's Johannesburg Branch, became a further step in the professionalisation process. It started as a 'ronoed' A4 publication containing two long articles of academic standard.<sup>22</sup> The first, a fourteen page presentation by Simon Biesheuvel, the newly appointed Director of the National Institute for Personnel Research, and South Africa's most eminent research psychologist, on "The Application of Military Research to Industry". The second, by White, on "Measures of Human Well-Being in Industry: Absenteeism: Labour Turnover: Accidents." Among the 'NOTES' in the Journal, readers were informed that the Port Elizabeth Branch was formed in August 1945 and that branches will shortly be formed in Cape Town and Durban. If the institute was to be a professional body it needed a journal of substance, signifying that it was the voice of an organisation striving towards professional status. The quarterly journal was a first attempt by a fledging body to have its own professional publication to meet a further requirement of a professional body representing practitioners striving to obtain professional recognition.

On the 4 September 1946 the Cape Town branch was launched and on 4 June 1947 the

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<sup>22</sup> Copies of *Personnel Management* Volumes 1- 21 (July 1946-December 1970) are lodged in the Archives of the Johannesburg City Library. Volumes 22-23 are missing.

inaugural meeting of the Natal Branch of the IPM was held . Prof T H Kelly of the Commerce Department of the Natal University College convened the meeting at which White was present and addressed the meeting on “Personnel Management.”<sup>23</sup> The Johannesburg Branch emerged as the strongest and largest of the branches. The other branches suffered setbacks after the early enthusiasm. The Durban Branch became inactive after a few years and it was only when Humphreys returned from Port Elizabeth, and after meeting Isobel White in Pietermaritzburg in 1958, that he was inspired to set about rejuvenating the Branch in that year.<sup>24</sup> The Cape Town Branch aligned itself with the National Development and Management Foundation (NDMF) until it disbanded in 1947, but re-emerged as the Western Province Institute in 1961. The Port Elizabeth Branch later changed its name to the Midlands Institute but a few years later it became inactive.<sup>25</sup>

Isobel White’s achievements in a space of seven years, whilst raising three children, must place her among the leading women of the 1940s in South Africa. Professor Roux van der Merwe, referring to Isobel White’s contribution, stated, “.... she was ahead of her time, probably about 30 years.”<sup>26</sup> The British tradition had the ability to produce women of recognised leadership in the personnel field. For example, Miss E L Newcomb was the President of the British Institute of Labour Management (later the IPM) in 1921 -1922, possibly a role model for White.

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<sup>23</sup> White recounted this meeting in the LIRI Annual Report, 1948. These reports are located in the defunct LIRI archives in Grahamstown. The researcher recommended they be placed in the Cory Library.

<sup>24</sup> Humphreys, interviews with researcher in May 1998 and Tommy Vogel in June 1998, one time Chairman of the Natal Branch. Also, Humphreys letter to the Editor, Indaba, Natal Coastal Branch newsletter, where he outlined his IPM activities, 30/9/1996.

<sup>25</sup> Bebb, “Development and Evaluation”, p.18.

<sup>26</sup> White, letter to the researcher, 17/11/1998.

Late in 1946, the Johannesburg Branch was offered and accepted affiliate membership of the IPM in Great Britain.<sup>27</sup> This status illustrates that each branch in South Africa operated independently at this stage. In his first Annual Report to the Branch for the year ended 31/12/1946, the Chairman, Dr Pinky Hill, reported 147 members, among whom were listed Dr S Biesheuvel and R V Sutton (who later became three times National President of the South African IPM).<sup>28</sup> These names, signal the high status of members at the time and the standing with which the new association was viewed. Herb Humphreys drew attention to the company seniority of many of the IPM members in those early years.<sup>29</sup> By the end of April 1947, the formation of a National Council for South Africa had been discussed and the Johannesburg Branch had agreed that they would accept the transfer of members from other branches “without payment of a transfer fee.”<sup>30</sup> By the end of 1948, no further progress was reported in forming a national organisation, but the Johannesburg membership had grown to 219. The Branch grew steadily and in 1948 a course of lectures was offered jointly by the IPM and the University of Witwatersrand on “Human Relations in Industry.” The title reflects the continued influence of the American human relations school on personnel management in South Africa.

The launch of the IPM was welcomed by the SA Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) and the Assistant Director of the SAIRR was asked to serve on the Johannesburg Branch committee.<sup>31</sup> The SAIRR Annual Report stated that it was inevitable that the IPM would

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<sup>27</sup> Personnel Management , 1, 2 (Fourth Quarter, 1946).

<sup>28</sup> Personnel Management , 1, 2 (Fourth Quarter, 1946).

<sup>29</sup> Humphreys, letter to Indaba, 30/9/1996.

<sup>30</sup> Personnel Management , 2, 2 (Second Quarter, 1947).

<sup>31</sup> SA Institute of Race Relations: 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Report: 1945 -1946. ”.... the interest that has been aroused shows that industrialists and others are realizing the need for the scientific use and management of labour,” p.24.



have to take full account of the race relations aspect of industrial management and hoped that the two institutes could be mutually helpful and co-operate in this regard. The SAIRR was very aware of the conflicting provisions of labour laws affecting Africans and actively researched, debated and proposed changes on personnel matters involving industrial relations, the Unemployment Insurance Fund and the registration of African trade unions. The SAIRR was aware also, of the negative impact and resentment among African workers of the restrictive nature of the Industrial Conciliation Act (ICA) and wanted the machinery of the ICA to be available for African workers. The SAIRR believed that further discriminatory legislation was likely to increase the already great resentment amongst African workers.<sup>32</sup>

No comment or discussion was found in IPM documents, which recorded any recognition of the current or long term damaging implications of racially biased legislation. The belief among personnel practitioners seems to have been to 'work within the system'. The IPM was not seen as a lobby for change to labour legislation. That function was left to other non-governmental organisations, such as the SAIRR and the Federated Chamber of Industries (FCI). The approach of the IPM was to work towards developing harmonious relations within the work environment and within the law.

The IPM's *Personnel Management* journal made no mention in any of its issues in 1948 of the change of government in 1948 when the National Party under Dr D F Malan came to power and which heralded the introduction of heightened racial separation. The new government's policies had far-reaching implications for personnel management, which makes the significance of the silence by the IPM on the impact of political and related social issues notable, a silence which continued for many years. Rheinallt-Jones, Adviser on Native Affairs to the Anglo-American Corporation, in an address to the IPM

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<sup>32</sup> SA Institute of Race Relations: 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Report: 1945 - 1946:



on 28/9/1948, explained that:

In our country industrial relations involves race relations..... In our situation more than elsewhere sound human relations between the various sections of industrial personnel are a fundamental necessity. Therefore in the training of workers special attention must be given to the cultivation of sound racial attitudes on both sides of the colour line.<sup>33</sup>

Two elements emerge from his thinking. First, there was an awareness at Anglo American that race was an issue to be dealt with in the work situation on the mines. Second, that the 'principle of separation' appeared as a 'fait accompli' for personnel management and one had to work around its problems by 'sound human relations'.

### **Isobel White and the Contribution of the Leather Industries Research Institute (LIRI)**

The Annual LIRI Report published in 1945 contained five pages reporting on the work of the Personnel Research Section, which covered areas of research and application in industry. One report told of an innovation in a factory where ten minute Health Lectures during working time had been introduced with an accompanying photograph of a lecture in progress showing a group of between 60-70 women standing listening to the presentation - all white.<sup>34</sup> The article is significant as an illustration of the basic level of welfare needs of workers that required attention. In 1946 LIRI published in book form a collection of research papers, illustrative of the work undertaken by White and her team at

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<sup>33</sup> Rheinallt Jones, IPM Address, 28/9/1948, p.27. Jones, the long time Director of the SAIRR, became Adviser on Native Affairs to Anglo-American in 1948. Private Papers: William Cullen Library.

<sup>34</sup> A copy of the relevant section of the Report is included as Appendix 3.1 as it reflects the nature of the work being undertaken.

LIRI over the previous five years.<sup>35</sup> It was the first book published in South Africa on personnel research and included chapters on the history of the personnel function, the keeping of personnel records, the role of foremen and the role of the personnel manager in industry. The collection is important as it illustrates what were perceived at the time as the important areas requiring attention, at least in leather related industries.

In her introduction to the book, White explains the motivations of the research “as seeking to apply the science of industrial psychology to the individual in the leather industry.” Her aim at LIRI was to undertake scientific studies into the welfare and efficiency of people to enable them to reach maximum efficiency by improving working conditions, by improved selection and training of individuals, by studying methods of reducing boredom and fatigue, improving bench layouts and accident prevention. The value of the book is the rare picture it presents of the nature and level of the personnel needs at the time that required attention

She saw herself in a pioneering position requiring her to “enter the field of personnel administration and management.”<sup>36</sup> The unit she headed dealt with the many personnel problems in large industries and found that “it was necessary that trained personnel managers be in charge as the only solution to this problem.” For White, the role of the personnel function arises from an organisational need for its services. The nature of the functions of a Personnel Manager at the time, are outlined and she provides a list of duties giving the responsibilities as perceived in the mid 1940s, and offers a useful illustration of

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<sup>35</sup> White, Personnel Research. A copy of the Contents page is included as Appendix 3.2 as it provides a useful summary of the breadth of research undertaken by the Personnel Research Section.

<sup>36</sup> White, Personnel Research, pp.3-8.

where lay the priorities.<sup>37</sup> The list reflects the transition that had occurred. On the one hand, White's book reveals the ongoing welfare functions performed by, what were essentially social workers, eg., teaching women about health matters. It also shows the strong emphasis on dealing adequately with heat, fatigue and safety issues. The importance of sound personnel skills are emphasised by stressing the need for good employment practices, sound personnel administration, improved selection techniques through appropriate tests and well designed job training. The book provides one of the few available insights into what comprised personnel practice in the early to mid-1940s in South Africa.

White's list of duties of a personnel manager were comparable to that of a leading British exponent at the time. C H Northcott in his Personnel Department Organisation Chart, gives a detailed and more advanced British presentation of the functions of a Personnel Manager.<sup>38</sup> A further indication of priorities is found in Northcott's "Syllabus of Training for Personnel Managers", which was approved by the Institute of Labour Management (UK) in 1939.<sup>39</sup> The course covered a broad based knowledge of business and industrial practices, which is balanced with personnel administration, industrial relations, training and health knowledge, in an endeavour to offer the personnel candidate a rounded introduction to running a business as well as personnel skills.<sup>40</sup> White adapted this

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<sup>37</sup> White, Personnel Research. A copy of the "Duties of Personnel Manager", pp.314 - 316 is included as Appendix 3.3 for its comparative value.

<sup>38</sup> See Appendix 2.1.

<sup>39</sup> Northcott., Personnel Management, pp.318-321. See Appendix 3.4.

<sup>40</sup> Northcott in the Third Edition of his book published in 1955, reveals his advanced perception of management. He provides a concise definition of management as "a process of getting results through people" which he says is the key to the revisions made in the book. He links this to a second insight that "Personnel Management is thought of as 'leadership' directed towards winning the fullest effort of the whole establishment ...(based on) a more adequate understanding of human nature and a deeper analysis of human behaviour." (p.v). Perceptions which took a generation to materialise in South Africa and are still

syllabus to a country still coming to terms with the need to employ personnel managers in industry in her recommendations for the Rhodes Diploma.

A further indication of White's diverse interests, referred to in Chapter Two (pp 58-64), is found in her involvement with the Juvenile Affairs Board which provided vocational guidance to boys and girls leaving school to assist them in finding suitable employment . It reflected her recognition that personnel management was not simply about what was managed within the confines of the factory. She involved herself in the Board because its vocational guidance role ultimately assisted in the better selection of new recruits. She petitioned the local Member of Parliament on the need for support for the Board. An insight into how she was perceived at that level is given by the member, Mr Johnson, in addressing Parliament in 1945. Speaking on the issue he referred to her as someone he knew, ".....as very capable and very conscientious and a thinking person who takes a very deep interest in all matters pertaining to the efficiency of industry ....and had made some pertinent remarks that could improve the Bill (*under discussion* )."<sup>41</sup> A significant element in her submission was that the secretary of the Board should hold a BA or MA, which seems to reflect her belief in the need for highly qualified persons in such work, as was her belief for those involved in personnel management.

In her detailed Curriculum Vitae, White refers to herself as a 'Consultant' from 1951 - 1959 in industrial psychological problems for a wide range of prominent companies, many beyond the leather and shoe manufacturing industry.<sup>42</sup> It is at this point one detects a sameness in her approach to traditional problems and a lack of awareness of the newer

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seen to be potentially relevant.

<sup>41</sup> Hansard, 12/4/1945: p.5238 - 5240.

<sup>42</sup> White, curriculum vitae.

schools of thought emerging in the USA, where more innovative ideas were being propagated to solve industrial productivity problems.

White left LIRI and Grahamstown in 1958 for Pietermaritzburg, where her husband had been appointed to the Chair of Classics. In 1960, White followed her husband to Oxford, where he had gone on a sabbatical. They did not return permanently to South Africa and she followed an academic career overseas, but maintained an ongoing interest in South Africa, becoming a regular visitor, especially to IPM annual conventions. She died at age 90 in London in 2000 after her last visit to South Africa and the Annual IPM convention in 1999.<sup>43</sup>

### **Simon Biesheuvel and the National Institute of Personnel Research**

While White was making her contribution, an even more dominant figure in a related field had begun to add his research capabilities to the growth of personnel management. Simon Biesheuvel, referred to in Chapter Two for his wartime contribution, had emerged in South African as an eminent psychological researcher.<sup>44</sup> In 1946 he was invited to form the Bureau for Personnel Research (soon to be upgraded to the National Institute for Personnel Research {NIPR}), as part of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) under Dr Basil Schonland, Biesheuvel applied his knowledge of psychology to the benefit of a wide range of purposes, but mostly to the benefit of mining and industry. The peace time task of building an efficient civil service and promoting the growth of mining and other industries, posed challenges calling for research and development work

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<sup>43</sup> White, Interview with researcher 5/11/1999.

<sup>44</sup> Surprisingly, no full biography on Biesheuvel has been written. Verster (1991) produced a *Tribute*. Lester (1956) produced an early *Profile*. Her *Profile* provides a contemporaneous perspective on Biesheuvel, whom she describes as “a man of deep humanity and rare integrity.... of richness of mind and a charm of manner.”



in many new directions, for which he was especially qualified..

Under Biesheuvel's leadership the NIPR grew into a diversified centre for research into productivity and the well-being of people at work.<sup>45</sup> The assistance of the NIPR was called upon by many sectors of the expanding South African economy, to address personnel and organisational problems. The NIPR has featured much in articles and literature from its commencement into the 1980s. Some of its research work was published in its own journal, *Psychologia Africana*. Many of its researchers later moved on to take up senior positions in a variety of organisations in South African and overseas. The NIPR and Biesheuvel, who was a prolific writer, produced a vast amount of research material, journal articles and other published literature. In the late 1970s and 1980s, there arose a school of thinking, strongly based at the University of Witwatersrand, which was critical of both Biesheuvel and the NIPR. The criticism had two foci. The first, the implied inferiority or human differences in Africans, suggested by the psychological tests that had been developed. Biesheuvel strongly denied this interpretation as ill informed. The second, from an ideological perspective, that the whole exercise was another means of exploiting black labour, particularly in the gold mines. Biesheuvel became unpopular in Afrikaans circles at one stage, as some of his research was interpreted as implying that Afrikaners may be inferior to other "Europeans", based on certain intelligence tests developed at the NIPR.

Biesheuvel resigned from the NIPR in 1962. When he started in 1946 there were eight staff members and when he left there were one hundred and thirty persons. Under his leadership the NIPR had developed an international reputation, providing a sustained and innovative record of personnel research and application. Most of the test instruments used

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<sup>45</sup> Van Vuuren, L. J. "Die Geskiedenis van die Nasionale Instituut vir Personeelnavorsing (NIPN) as 'n Sielkundige-Geïntegreerde Instansie: 1946 - 1984." Unpublished Assignment towards a M Comm, Rand Afrikaans University, Johannesburg, (1984). Provides considerable historical data.



in personnel selection were linked to the NIPR. The racial complexity of the South African workforce resulted in a growing interest in the possible significance of differences among the various racial groups and it was this aspect that led to criticism of Euro-centric bias in the research and outcomes. The Institute tested and accredited candidates who needed to hold the credentials to apply psychological tests in industry and business, many of whom were personnel practitioners. Many job adverts for personnel officers included the requirement of being a registered test user. The status of the NIPR meant that it dominated the personnel research arena.<sup>46</sup>

From 1963-1973 Biesheuvel served on the board of the S A Breweries Group (SAB) as Personnel Director. He set up a model personnel department based on scientifically tested personnel management procedures and organisational principles. This period afforded him ideal opportunities for the practical application and further development of procedures and techniques which had their origin at the NIPR. Verster reports that Biesheuvel "... saw his work at SAB as a final test of their validity."<sup>47</sup>

In 1973, having passed normal retirement age, Biesheuvel accepted the appointment at the University of Witwatersrand, as Professor of Business Administration and Director of the Post-Graduate School of Business Administration, which function he fulfilled for four years. Thereafter, he continued to write and publish until his death in 1991.

Biesheuvel had an ongoing relationship with the IPM. He attended the IPM meetings in

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<sup>46</sup> In reviewing his work with the NIPR, Biesheuvel stated "The NIPR has enormously influenced the development of applied psychology in South Africa. It is impossible to summarise its contribution. It scored its first major success with the construction of the General Adaptability Test for the classification of illiterate black mine workers..... The test procedure, introduced in 1948, scored an international success and is still in use today, though in modified form (1979)." Address by Biesheuvel, *Some Notes on the Development of Psychology in S A*, 29/9/1979. Private Papers Collection: University of Witwatersrand.

<sup>47</sup> J Verster, Simon Biesheuvel (1908 - 1991) *S A Journal of Psychology*, 21,4 (1991), p.269.

the early days after the establishment of the Johannesburg Branch and regularly contributed articles to its Journal and addressed its meetings. At the 1961 Annual Convention he spoke on “Some of the Characteristics of the African Worker”, a topic which later in the 1960s became the subject of ongoing interest as mines and industries attempted to create better working relationships through an understanding of African workers by white foremen and managers.<sup>48</sup> This approach to improving working relations was attacked in the 1970s as paternalistic capitalism and not attending to the fundamental issue of race politics.

The IPM recognised Biesheuvel’s contribution and honoured him with the “Personnel Award of the Year” award in 1978. Verster, who had worked with Biesheuvel for many years, summed up his contribution to personnel work.

His initiatives and innovative work in industry were instrumental in transforming personnel practice in South Africa from an administrative to a scientifically based professional function.<sup>49</sup>

Herein lies much of the importance of Biesheuvel and the NIPR. He emerged at a time when South Africa required a person of intellect and initiative, to provide the research

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<sup>48</sup> Raymond Silberbauer, Director of the Bantu Wage and Productivity Association, made a name for himself throughout South Africa during the 1960s with his “Know Your Bantu Worker” presentation, which was in regular demand. Its popularity suggests that there was a recognition of a lack of understanding on the part of white foremen and managers, who needed educating to enable them to better deal with their African labour. His approach was later used by a school of sociologists in the late 1970s and 1980s, who saw in Silberbauer, an example of paternalism, colonial mentality and oppressive techniques. This is illustrated by David Webster, SA Labour Bulletin, 3,1 (1976), p 53 -54. He sees Silberbauer and Peter Becker as presenting ‘popular anthropology’ which rests on the assumption that African workers belong to a different culture which has to be sympathetically understood. He criticises them for not recognising “ the dominant fact of South Africa’s political and socio-economic life, that South Africa is subject to the policy of separate development, even though in earlier times,..... not so openly coercive , but nevertheless exploitative.”

<sup>49</sup> Verster, “Simon Biesheuvel”, p.269.

dynamic to assist industry. Some of his work was controversial and it was inevitable that Biesheuvel would generate reaction, given the South African socio-political context. In assessing Biesheuvel's contribution Dick Sutton commented, "Biesheuvel was one of the great brains of this country, akin to that of Jannie Smuts. His problem was that his view was too narrow in his concept of industrial psychology and did not deal adequately with the broader issues. He did not seem to recognise that he was dealing with psychology and not pure science. For example: a pilot was more than a manipulator of the controls of an aircraft. The pilot was human and could suffer 'shell shock'. I discussed these issues with him."<sup>50</sup> No doubt, Biesheuvel would have denied this, as he had published a research paper in conjunction with White on "The Human Factor in Flying Accidents."<sup>51</sup>

The significance for the professionalisation of personnel practice of Biesheuvel and the NIPR and its research contribution, lay in the deepening of an understanding of the nature of personnel problems and the improved (more 'professional') solutions they offered to personnel practitioners who applied these insights to industries needs. The role of Biesheuvel, as a dominant figure, and the work of the NIPR has been addressed in some detail due to the world class standard of their work and for their contribution to the advancement of professionalisation.

### **Consolidation of the Gains in Personnel Management**

The loose association of South African branches of the IPM was seen as unsatisfactory by some members, who saw the need and value of an integrated national body. The

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<sup>50</sup> Sutton, interview with researcher, 14/3/2003. Sutton was three times President of the IPM and knew Biesheuvel over many years of activity with the IPM and as a successor to Biesheuvel as Personnel Director at SAB.

<sup>51</sup> S A Air Force Journal, (January 1949).

Johannesburg branch made overtures in this regard to the other branches.<sup>52</sup> Cape Town and Port Elizabeth were supportive, but Durban appeared reluctant to lose their independence. There was consensus that time and distance were inhibitors and it was decided to continue to consolidate the branch activities locally with the ultimate aim to achieve unity in the future. The membership of the Johannesburg Branch stood at 241 for 1951, but by 1952 it was reported to be down to 218, which suggests a falling off of interest and earlier enthusiasm.

By 1951, at least in the Transvaal, personnel management had reached a stage where the function of the personnel manager was being increasingly accepted. The Branch Chairman's three page Annual Report illustrated a new confidence among personnel managers.<sup>53</sup> He reported that the IPM's bona fides was not in doubt. It had achieved its original objectives of obtaining general recognition of the philosophy and aims of personnel management, and of training in, and promoting of, good personnel practice. This had led to conferring "a professional status upon its members .....and, as our Institute's prestige increases, so too will the professional status to be derived from membership." The members appear to have believed that professional recognition resided in their membership of the IPM. This professional status was seen to be conferred through membership of the IPM, by virtue of the Branch affiliation to the British IPM, which was accepted as a professional body. What is not indicated, is what other qualifications and standards may have been required to attain the status of a professional.

Two other matters affecting members were mentioned by the Chairman. First, that striving for the greater acceptance of personnel management was still an "uphill struggle".

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<sup>52</sup> Johannesburg branch of the IPM, minutes of the Annual General Meeting, 11/3/1952. IPM Archives

<sup>53</sup> W H Felling, Chairman's Annual Report for year 1951. Annual General Meeting, 11/3/1952. IPM Archives.

“Even where personnel management has been accepted in principle ... we find all the unhappy complications which flow from a numerically preponderant Bantu population, and despite the outstanding work of the NIPR in the field, many South Africans still do not think of Personnel Management in terms of other than European.” Second, the value to members of using the Institute as a forum for sharing problems and “remedies” and the provision of training courses by the Institute using experienced members in such courses. The IPM at this time may be observed to be in its early formative stages of growth. The reference to “professional status” was premature in terms of the criteria being applied in the study.

The IPM had the benefit of a visit in 1951 by the Deputy Director of the British IPM, Miss Buckley-Sharp, which was important as the South African branches were affiliates, but also for the input of ideas direct from the British experience. It was also significant, for its re-enforcement of the British tradition of women being in senior IPM positions from its earliest days.

During the mid-1950s, a number of items were reported by the Johannesburg Branch which illustrate developments within the IPM. In 1954 the National Development and Management Foundation (NDMF)<sup>54</sup> ran a course for managers where, it was reported, “personnel management was viewed as not part of management.”<sup>55</sup> This caused sufficient agitation for the IPM Branch to call for closer liaison between the IPM and the NDMF. The issue reflects an understanding on the part of the IPM that personnel managers believed themselves to be part of management, which appears not to have been the

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<sup>54</sup> The National Development and Management Foundation (NDMF), established in 1948 by Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, had been created with the aim of training and developing all those in management functions, from supervisor to managing director. It was perceived as an important representative of business and its views and contribution were taken seriously by IPM members.

<sup>55</sup> IPM, minutes of the Johannesburg branch, 18/5/1954.

common understanding on the part of general management. In 1955 Dr Hill and Rheinald Hofmeyer arranged for the IPM to provide a set of lectures for fourth year students in the Department of Mining Engineering at the University of Witwatersrand.<sup>56</sup> The topics included: "Introduction to the Science of Personnel Management", "The Practical Application of Personnel Management in the Mining Industry" and "Personnel Selection Methods." The opportunity suggested that the mining industry had begun to recognise that sound personnel practice needed to be considered as an integral part of the management of the employment relationship.

A third item in 1956 reported a Branch meeting where Trade Union speakers addressed IPM members.<sup>57</sup> No mention was made of growing government threats to clamp down on trade union activity for African workers. The most plausible explanation is found in the separation of workers along the race divide. White management was comfortable in dealing with white led trade unions representing white and coloured workers and the IPM did not regard it as unusual for its members to be addressed by Trade Union spokespersons.

### **The Role of Industrial Psychology in Personnel Management in South Africa**

Industrial psychology played a prominent role in the early development of personnel management in South Africa. White applied her knowledge of industrial psychology in her work at LIRI. The NIPR applied both pure psychology and industrial psychology techniques in their industry based research. Personnel management drew on the social

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<sup>56</sup> Personnel Management, 16, 2 & 17, 1 (1955).

<sup>57</sup> Executive Committee Minutes of the South African Institute of Personnel Management: 4/7/1956. "Morris Kagan, a leading personality in the trade union movement and Treasurer of a big commercial trade union, spoke on what he expects of a personnel department. Miss Robarts, the National Vice President of a very large trade union spoke about what she expects of a personnel manager."



sciences for the intellectual structuring of its concepts.

From the 1940s in South Africa, industrial psychology played a leading part in the provision of the academic background for the application of personnel practices. The universities took an important role in offering courses in industrial psychology, which was seen as the practical application of psychological knowledge in industry with a scientifically researched basis. Courses in Industrial Psychology were offered within the Department of Psychology. For instance, the University of Stellenbosch began providing training in 1943. The growth in popularity of industrial psychology may be observed from the number of registered students majoring in Industrial Psychology. In 1949 there were 74 under-graduates and no post-graduates. In 1978 there were 742 under-graduates, a tenfold increase, with 45 post-graduates in 1978 but none in 1949.<sup>58</sup> Third year students were required to study personnel management subjects, such as, Salary and Wage Administration; Reward Systems; Manpower Planning, Productivity; Labour Law, Industrial Relations, Consulting and Consultation Skills. The topics were similar to those dealt with in the IPM Diploma, as reported later in this chapter.

There appears to be significance in the different emphases to be found in another growing discipline, Industrial Sociology. Industrial Psychology may be found from its inception to have provided assistance to meet industry needs for improved productivity, organisational structure and personnel skills in the interests of corporate success in a capitalist system. Industrial Sociology, with its greater emphasis on group identity, appears in the South African context to have provided greater service, over the longer term, to labour movements, trade unions and more socialist orientated causes. The Department of Industrial Sociology at the University of Witwatersrand, and its more recent research

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<sup>58</sup> A Van der Merwe, "Opleiding in die Bedryfsielkunde op Universiteit van Stellenbosch" Perspectives in Psychology, 4,3 (1978).

off shoot, the Sociology of Work Unit (SWOP), illustrate this distinction.

Industrial Psychology has been associated with the development of personnel management in South Africa from its inception. Industrial Psychology's striving for professional recognition and status may be paralleled to that of Personnel Management. Both display an attempt to attain certain identified criteria which would 'prove' that the discipline had achieved professional status. In order to obtain a historical perspective events affecting developments in industrial psychology in a future period are incorporated in what follows, which will prevent a disjointed depiction of what occurred. Industrial Psychology became affected by a split in the professional body. The original professional association representing psychologists, the South African Psychological Association (SAPA) and founded in 1949, split in 1962. A breakaway all white body, the Sielkundige Instituut van die Republiek van Suid Afrika (SIRSA) emerged in keeping with government policy that called for separate societies to represent different racial groups. (English name, Psychological Institute of the Republic of South Africa {PIRSA}). SIRSA's membership strength lay largely in the Afrikaans universities and state departments and on application readily received statutory recognition. The two societies each produced their own journal. The original SAPA published *PSYGRAM* and SIRSA published the *South African Journal of Psychology*. In the late 1970s efforts were made to bring the two bodies together again and the Psychological Association of South Africa (PASA) was formed and an Institute for Industrial Psychology (IIP) emerged to represent the specific needs of the now re-united industrial psychologists.

The subsequent rapid growth of the IPM created a dilemma for some industrial psychologists, who debated whether it was more in their interests to join the IPM than the

IIP.<sup>59</sup> Membership of the IPM was less stringent, whereas for the IIP, full membership required a Masters degree and registration with the Medical and Dental Council via the Professional Board for Psychology. Their acceptance and registration with the Board, provided the basis for professional recognition of industrial psychologists and a control of standards. In theory they held a higher status than ordinary IPM members, but in practice it made little difference if they wished to work in a general personnel function.

In Chapter Four reference is made to the attempt in the Act 56 of 1974 to incorporate certain personnel functions within the exclusive functions of industrial psychologists. The IPM protested the definition which was later amended. The incident illustrated the perception within industrial psychology that those aspects of 'personnel psychology and personnel selection' were their rightful professional domain and should be exclusively undertaken only by registered industrial psychologists. During this period there were no 'professional' requirements for those wishing to work as personnel practitioners, although the IPM was moving to provide the basis for professional registration of personnel practitioners. The dilemma for industrial psychologists would become even greater if the IPM achieved its objective of statutory recognition. For industrial psychologists, their professional registration offered little to the practice of personnel management, other than where psychological testing was concerned. By 1983 negotiations between the Institute of Industrial Psychology and the SABPP resulted in an agreement where industrial psychologists would be able to register with the SABPP in a special category of "personnel practitioner (psychologiae)."<sup>60</sup> This was a reverse of the original attempt to incorporate statutorily, certain personnel functions within industrial psychology.

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<sup>59</sup> Roseann Neall. "IIP or IPM: Do we have a Choice?" Newsletter of the Institute for Industrial Psychology, (December 1983), pp.9-12.

<sup>60</sup> Jack Blignaut.. "IIP or IPM: An Excellent Opportunity". Newsletter of the Institute of Industrial Psychology, (December 1983), p.13.

The issue illustrates the tension created where a prodigy (personnel practice) grows to the point where it wishes to establish itself in its own right and those who nurtured it (industrial psychology) feel threatened by its loss when unable to contain it any longer within its discipline. A similar pattern of development and independence was observed by Wilensky and others in a number of younger professions. (see pages 13-14). In the early 1970s academic industrial psychology had attempted to contain the growth of personnel management studies within its domain of interest, but lost out to the development of personnel/human resource management education in its own right.

### **Further Evolution of Personnel Management**

For personnel management the period 1945-1970 was one of relative industrial peace, arising from the government's action against dissident groupings and potentially militant trade unions. Economic growth occurred followed by an influx of foreign capital and accelerated industrial development, which brought in, both overseas skilled workers to meet the shortages, for example, qualified artisans, and an increase in African workers, who ultimately contributed to a change in the industrial relations system in South Africa.

During this period the IPM can be observed to have matured into an institute aware of its role as representative of its members and their interests. This maturity may be interpreted as resulting from the growing confidence of personnel practitioners in their role, as well as the increasing acceptance by their organisations that they had a valuable contribution to make to the success of their companies.

This maturing may be observed from a study in 1966 in the Western Cape by Trevor-Roberts, a University of Stellenbosch researcher, which revealed that between 1960 and 1965, 50% of the companies that participated in the study, had introduced Personnel

Departments since 1960.<sup>61</sup> Only 25% of the heads of those Personnel Departments were graduates and only 35 % held the title “Personnel Manager”. Of these companies, 55% used tests for the selection of new staff and 55% applied a job evaluation system in setting wages and salaries, suggesting the recognition of the value of selection testing and job evaluation. The study revealed that certain personnel management methods were becoming well established. No other comparative study could be located to enable a comparison with other regions in South Africa. The small number of graduates may be explained by the early stage of an emerging ‘profession’, where positions were obtained by practical experience, rather than academic qualification.

A further illustration of this maturing may be observed from the unification of the IPM branches into a national South African Institute of Personnel Management (SAIPM) in 1964, which marked the commencement of a new era and stage in the process of professionalisation. The SAIPM defined itself as:

The Institute is the association of men and women engaged in or associated with the personnel function of personnel management, and of firms or other organisations concerned with the principles of personnel management. The Institute was founded in 1946 and registered in 1959 and is a voluntary association financed by the subscriptions of its members and governed by an annually elected council. The aim of the Institute is to encourage and assist the development of personnel management in Southern Africa by: (i) spreading knowledge and developing better employer-employee co-operation within industry, and by undertaking research to this end; (ii) seeking to establish and maintain through training and other services, a high standard of qualification and performance.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Quoted by W S De Villiers. “Die Meting van die Gelyktydige Hantering van Teenstrydige en Dubbelsinnige Inligting as Kritiese Eienskap in a Verskydenheid van Beroepe.” Unpublished MA Thesis: University of Stellenbosch. 1980. The Trevor-Roberts study could not be located at Stellenbosch University and Trevor-Roberts no longer has a copy of his study.

<sup>62</sup> Brochure of the 1965 Annual Convention held in Sea Point.



Notable in the statement is the inclusive reference to “Southern Africa.” Behind this lay a political correctness in that the so-called separate ‘Homelands’ would be part of a Southern Africa concept. The SAIPM further understood itself as actively providing a forum for neighbouring countries with the offer of affiliate status, such as, Swaziland, Lesotho and the then Rhodesia. In 1971, the Institute of Personnel Management (Rhodesia) formally affiliated to the SAIPM.<sup>63</sup>

Although annual National Conventions were held for all IPM branch members from 1957, it was not until 1964 that the first unified national convention was held. The themes of these conventions provide insight into the topics perceived to be of importance to practitioners of the day. The Annual Conventions continued after the creation the National IPM in 1964. A sample of these themes in the period under investigation reveal changes taking place in personnel management priorities.<sup>64</sup>

The 1961 theme, *Personnel Management and the Bantu Labour force*, declared its purpose to be to help delegates to find the means of solving problems of “Bantu” labour development through “the progressive application of personnel management practice.” Simon Biesheuvel spoke on “Some of the characteristics of the African worker” and other topics dealt with “Laws and Regulations relating to the employment of the Bantu in urban areas”, “Communication” and “Job Evaluation”.

In 1965 the theme, *The Conservation of Manpower*, related to a pressing employment issue of the time and the purpose was explained as, “In the fast expanding economy of the

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<sup>63</sup> Although the official title was SAIPM, this would later change back again to IPM. In the interests of simplicity to avoid confusion, the shortened form IPM is used in this study as it is that acronym which has always commonly been apply

<sup>64</sup> Promotion pamphlets for the years 1961, 1962, 1965, 1966 (the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention) in IPM Archives. For a more comprehensive list of themes - see APPENDIX 3.5



Republic the problem of the effective use of manpower looms large before Management; this will become an increasingly pressing problem, to the solution of which we as personnel specialists hope to make an important contribution.” The theme reflects the problem of shortage of trained and qualified labour. Significantly, of 10 speakers, only one spoke on a welfare topic, indicating how the emphasis in personnel management had shifted. Topics dealt with the employment of older people, the use of female labour, and the effective use of “Non-European” labour. An additional feature was that the brochure, for the first time, appeared in English and Afrikaans, signaling a change in the number of Afrikaans speaking members and those now attending the conventions.

In 1970 the theme *Improving Business Results: The Evolving Personnel Contribution*, revealed a new emerging emphasis in personnel management where personnel practitioners were being called upon to play a more decisive role in organisational management. The theme is enlightening for a number of reasons. The convention was presided over by Val Mickelburgh,<sup>65</sup> the first woman President of the National body, whose function it was to suggest the theme which would be part of the emphasis of her presidential year. She had been moved from a line function in marketing to establish and run her company’s personnel function as Personnel Manager of Total SA. Her theme for the convention reflects an early sign that personnel managers were expected to take greater responsibility that their activities contributed to the bottom line success of the company. The theme described it an “evolving” process and Mickelburgh’s own career added weight to the new direction, coming as she did, from having held a line management position.

At the 1971 Convention, the Keynote address was given by J D Roberts, Chairman of

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<sup>65</sup> Interview with Mickelburgh by researcher 17/3/03 and 14/5/03. Mickelburgh’s file of Personnel documents was handed to the IPM in early 1990s on her retirement and was lost. A serious problem with other similar files, is that to date, there has been no established archival policy. This has resulted in the loss of very important historical material. Equally serious, is the destruction of files which may have included information which departing staff members may have preferred not to leave behind.

Murray and Roberts, a leading construction company. His title: "Top Managements Expectations of Personnel Management in the 1970s." Of significance was his questioning of the use of the new term 'human resources' to describe employees. Although not yet officially used by the IPM, he expressed concern at its implications. "Human resources indicates to me just another part of the tools of management equated with material resources."<sup>66</sup> His humanitarian concern was not reflected in the personnel literature of the time emanating from the USA, where the term was related to new thinking on the management of people at work. The reference is noted at this stage, as the early use did not emanate from within personnel circles, but later became the description of choice in South Africa.

In 1964 the IPM protested to the government over a proposal that the qualifications and functions of Personnel Officers be included on a professional register under the same category as Social Welfare Officers.<sup>67</sup> The protest specifically stated that the IPM,

...would not be opposed, in principle, to the establishment of a register for professional Personnel Managers and/or Personnel Officers, but feel that the definition of function and the qualifications required should be in conformity with modern concepts and practices; and that the normal procedure of making registration the responsibility of a professionally competent body, as in the case of Doctors and Accountants, should be followed.

The IPM reaction suggests that personnel practitioners were already thinking in terms of obtaining their own formal professional recognition. The reference to doctors and

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<sup>66</sup> Report in Personnel Management, 23, 1 (1972), p.5. The term had arisen in the 1960s when used by Eric Flamholtz, A Model for Human Resource Valuation. By the 1980s the term "human resource management" was wide spread in South Africa and by the 1990s would have replaced the use of "personnel management"

<sup>67</sup> IPM letter to the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions, Pretoria. IPM Minutes, 13/1/1964, Reference 27. IPM Archives.

accountants suggests that a statutory status was envisaged and desirable. Behind the government classification lay the concept that personnel practitioners were a form of social welfare worker, which may have been applicable twenty five years early, but was now no longer descriptive of their function.

The IPM letter listed the areas of activity of Personnel Management which was being implemented in mining, industry and commerce.

The human and social implications of work and organisation  
Recruitment and selection of employees and their training, promotion and development  
Relations between employer and employee, and of management with trade unions  
Internal communication and consultation  
Terms and conditions of employment, including wages and salaries  
Health, safety, welfare and employee services.<sup>68</sup>

The letter further outlined the requirements for individual “corporate membership” of the IPM. Such a person had to be at least twenty five years of age, passed examinations approved by the IPM, have been in an executive or specialist/advisory capacity for not less than three years in an organisation of not less than fifty employees, and to have been involved in the majority of a given list of personnel functions. If not in possession of a recognised academic qualification, such person would have at least a matriculation standard, be at least thirty years of age and have been employed for at least five years under the same requirements as above. In both cases the candidate would have to produce evidence of practical training in Industrial Psychology or Personnel Management which was acceptable to the Institute. The letter pointedly explained that these requirements were far different to those of a social worker, a further indication that the welfare orientation was now no longer the major preoccupation of the personnel function.

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<sup>68</sup> IPM letter to Department of Social Welfare, 13/1/1964.

The IPM may thus be observed at this time to have begun to lay down explicit educational and practical qualifications which they deemed were necessary for professional standing.

### **Action to Professionalise Personnel Management**

From the time of the launch of the IPM in 1945, no attempt had been made to develop a systematic approach to the professionalisation of the occupation. Education and ongoing training were recognised as fundamental and consistent efforts had been made in this regard. Membership of the IPM at the beginning was an assumed factor in the process of becoming professional. These early efforts appeared to be ad hoc and no record was found which systematically laid out what were the requirements for claiming professional status. The first reference to a set of criteria was located in the letter to the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions in 1964. A more systematic approach to achieving the professionalisation of personnel management and the role of the IPM, was first presented by IPM President, R V “Dick” Sutton, in his initial Presidential year, in a paper delivered to the Natal Branch in Durban in August 1966.<sup>69</sup> He outlined the need for professional status and the requirements to achieve this objective:

The move towards professional status occurs in many occupations and the coverage seems to widen as advancing industrialisation increases the demand for more sophisticated methods and techniques. In Personnel Management the issues have begun to crystallise with the general recognition of the function as a specialised aspect of management though.... the matter is nowhere near final solution.

Sutton addressed two major requirements prior to recognition. (i) Appropriate levels of education and training of candidates to attain the necessary standards of competence prior to acceptance for membership of the profession of Personnel Management. (ii) A code of

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<sup>69</sup> R V Sutton, “*Professional Status and Personnel Management*”, August 1966. Unpublished paper from R V Sutton private papers. Copy in possession of researcher.

behaviour which would create the necessary ethical obligations on members.

Sutton believed the Institute of Personnel Management was the “logical organisation through which professional status will be achieved” and proposed that active efforts should be set in motion to progress the aim of achieving professional recognition. He identified certain administrative factors that would need to be addressed to progress the professionalisation of personnel management.

He argued that the IPM had grown beyond the concept of a voluntary organisation and that two major steps needed to be taken. First, the centralised secretarial services needed to be expanded by the appointment of a full-time National Director. Second, the provision of secretarial services for the branches. Sutton wanted the Director to assist in “creating the right image” and developing the relevant technical aspects of the personnel function. The Director would, for example, develop liaison with the business world, organise training events, promote publications, provide services to members and arrange activities for members. These actions, he believed, would assist the process of professionalisation. To meet these demands attention would need to be directed at increasing membership and raising funds, despite resistance among some members to raising money as ‘professionally’ inappropriate. The matter of raising funds had been discussed among leading personnel practitioners, but he appears to be the first known leading IPM figure to formally propose an active programme to achieve the goal. At this stage the legal/statutory acceptance by the government of the personnel function as a registered profession was not reported as an item of discussion. He believed that professionalisation required administrative and practical support to improve the image and quality of the services practitioners offered.

Part of the move to professionalism required the IPM to ensure the highest level of knowledge among new comers and those without appropriate qualifications. In order to

improve the IPM's training contribution, a Training Sub-Committee was established in 1968. One of its tasks was the designing of training courses to meet member needs. The committee comprised four leading trainers, one of whom was VRM Bebb, who was to play a leading role in the furthering the training of practitioners. This move was supported in 1969, when the President, B Mattison, in his Annual Report stressed the importance of training. He stated that the Institute must set up and administer more realistic tuition, examination and qualification procedures, and provide training courses nationally to meet the changing requirements of personnel management in South Africa. In this way it could actively raise the professional status of personnel management and the IPM.<sup>70</sup>

Sutton's vision in 1966 was to become a reality. Mattison understood that if the IPM was to become a body representing a genuine profession, then major decisions were called for. The first of these was the appointment of a full-time National Director of the IPM. Dave Jackson, who had personnel and marketing experience, was appointed in December 1969. The Training Committee by then had identified three priority areas for attention, viz., Leading (Leadership), Selection and Job Evaluation, which indicate where the focus currently lay in personnel management in South Africa.

In April 1971 a historic decision was taken to launch a National Diploma in Personnel and Training Management, the planning of which was at an advantaged stage. The process of preparing and administering the diploma was carefully structured.<sup>71</sup> The Diploma had been under consideration for a number of years, which included commissioning a study by

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<sup>70</sup> IPM, minutes of the AGM, 10/9/69.

<sup>71</sup> VRM Bebb, "Development of Professional Personnel Education in the Republic of South Africa : The Development and Evaluation of a Open Learning Correspondence Programme for the Personnel Profession." Vol 2. Unpublished PhD diss., Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand, 1978. For Flow Chart, Figure 5, see APPENDIX 3.6.



the University of the Orange Free State.<sup>72</sup> VRM Bebb was appointed Education Director of the IPM in 1972 to oversee all training activities, including the launching and administering of the Diploma. In its planning the IPM had access to a survey which analysed the views of Institute members towards university training facilities.<sup>73</sup> The Diploma was constructed on a pioneering “Learner Controlled” concept, the first of its kind in South Africa in relation to distance learning.<sup>74</sup> It applied an “open learning system” adaptable to the different needs and experience of potential students.

The IPM had moved slowly before taking the decision to launch the Diploma for a number of reasons. It needed the approval of the National Department of Education. The launch required courage and commitment as the IPM had no standing as a recognised teaching institution and no government financial support in a competitive climate, where other institutions were offering similar courses. The IPM had to produce an educational product that met professional standards and met the needs of the students. Part of the planning included calling for IPM members, who were qualified, to assist in preparing the tuition material for the courses in their private time.

The list of courses provide an insight into what was believed at the time to be the basics for a trained personnel practitioner. The Diploma was structured in two parts:

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<sup>72</sup> H P Langenhoven and R Verster, “Oprname van Personeelbestuur in Suid Afrika.” P/No P1, Personnel Research Division, University of the Orange Free State: Bloemfontein, 1969.

<sup>73</sup> Prof. Dr F W Marx, “Opleiding in the Bedryfseksonomie in die Huidige Tydflak.” Publikasie van the Universiteit van Pretoria. Nuwe Reeks NR 88. Pretoria. and published in 1974. This was followed by “Opleiding in Personeelbestuur in Suid Afrika.” Nr 82, and published in 1974.

<sup>74</sup> V R M Bebb, “Learner Controlled Training”, People and Profits, 1,7 (January 1974), pp.20-25,

The *Intermediate Diploma Examination*, comprising five subjects: Introduction to Personnel and Training; Manning; Salary and Rewards; Safety, Health and Welfare; Industrial Relations.

The *Advanced Diploma Examination*, comprising eight subjects: Motivation; Productivity; Organisation Development; Manpower Planning; Management Accounting; Management; Introduction to Statistics; In-company Consultancy and Counselling

Examinations were held twice per year and students could take as many or as few subjects as they chose. The first students were enrolled in the second semester of 1973. The first five graduates of the Diploma were awarded at the end of 1976.<sup>75</sup>

As an indication of the need for formal Personnel Management training, the Witwatersrand Technical College planned to offer a three year Diploma in Personnel Management in 1970 and to offer shorter courses. The IPM requested that the College allow IPM members to run the short courses.<sup>76</sup> These developments reflect the pressing need for more formal training arising from a growing demand for trained personnel practitioners in a changing world.<sup>77</sup>

The decision by the IPM, finally to launch its own Diploma, was prompted by the exclusion of black students from attending whites only Technikons or Colleges, which offered specialist courses. With the increasing numbers of black personnel staff who needed specialist personnel training being recruited, the IPM believed it could meet a

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<sup>75</sup> The researcher was among the first five graduates.

<sup>76</sup> IPM, minutes of the Transvaal branch, 25/11/1969.

<sup>77</sup> The theme of the 1969 Annual Convention - "Personnel Management in a Changing World".

major educational need through its distance learning diploma.<sup>78</sup> The Diploma also served the interests of the IPM, as over a four year period the Institute's membership grew by around a thousand members as a direct result of the introduction of the Diploma. Bebb's report on the development and the success of the Diploma is contained in his PhD thesis.

During the period of preparing and launching the IPM Diploma, universities continued to offer their own personnel and industrial psychology programmes. In 1971, the University of Rhodes restructured, the now, "Diploma in Personnel Management" ("welfare" having been removed) and located it within the Department of Sociology.<sup>79</sup> The required courses for the one year diploma were now: Business Economics (two papers); Management and Marketing (one paper); Industrial Sociology (one paper each in Industrial Relations and Personnel Management, which required four weeks of practical work in industry or a mine, plus a research report); Psychology in Industry (two papers, one on industrial psychology and one on statistics). By 1975 the Diploma in Personnel Management was no longer offered.<sup>80</sup> The reason for this decision could not be found.

Parallel with the educational initiatives there was growth in national IPM membership during this period illustrating the expansion of personnel management. At unification in 1964 there were around 530 members. Five years later, in 1969, the number had increased by 62% to 890.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> John Dickerson interview with researcher, 26/8/2003. He was a member of the Education Committee which launched the Diploma.

<sup>79</sup> Calendar of the University of Rhodes 1971, pp.399-401.

<sup>80</sup> Calendar of the University of Rhodes, 1975.

<sup>81</sup> See APPENDIX 3.7 for membership figures.

## **The Emergence of African Personnel Practitioners**

With the growth of industry during this period (1945-1972), which required increasing numbers of African workers in urban areas, the government tightened its control on all aspects of African labour. Personnel departments were required to recruit the best labour available, arrange for their ongoing training and apply the numerous administrative requirements for registration of Africans in terms of government legislation. To meet these changes from the mid 1960s, personnel departments began employing an increasing number of black personnel staff to assist in the administrative tasks and later in training functions where the ability to communicate in the trainees language played an important part.

It was suggested in Chapter Two (pages 52-53) that the rudimentary personnel functions carried out by the *izinduna* and *izibonda* were forerunners to the later emergence of the African Personnel Practitioner (APP). As time passed the mines and larger companies, who had used white clerical staff to service black employees, replaced them with African 'labour clerks', some with matric or higher qualifications. In many instances, these African clerks formed a bridging process leading to the introduction of APPs. In the mid to late 1960s, personnel departments began to recruit African graduates, believing they needed more highly educated African staff members to take on more sophisticated functions. Their role at the beginning was largely administrative. Labour influx control and other restrictive legislation affecting African workers was firmly in place and enforced. Companies were required to comply with the administrative requirements of "influx control" legislation which restricted the free geographical movement of African workers.

Often only rudimentary personnel records were in existence, even in companies whose

work force comprised thousands of employees. A typical example was the Romatex Textile factory on the outskirts of Durban where a “Bantu” personnel officer was appointed in 1966 to establish a Personnel Department for “Non-Whites”.<sup>82</sup>

The need for improved selection, training and motivating of African employees had been identified for many years, but had now become a priority in the interests of increased productivity. “Bantu” training officers were appointed to assist in this regard. Some of these new appointees became A and B Level approved test users in terms of the NIPR rating and were sent for training to equip them to run NIPR selection and ability tests, some of which required graduate qualifications.<sup>83</sup> An increasing number of these APPs were graduates, but others were “Bantu” personnel clerks, with or without degrees, who were promoted to newly created Personnel Assistant or Personnel Officer positions. No figures could be located to identify how many were appointed during this period. Their status became a contentious issue as they believed they were performing the same functions as their white Personnel Officer counterparts, but not receiving the same recognition. This perception of racial discrimination became a cause of resentment and this and other issues are identified and analysed by Blade Nzimande.<sup>84</sup>

In 1970 just over twenty of South Africa’s leading APPs were invited to a two week training course at the University College of Fort Hare, which had been specially designed

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<sup>82</sup> JB Magwaza , interview with researcher, 15/4/1998) He was the original appointee

<sup>83</sup> The NIPR classification tests were divided into three levels, all of which required testers to be trained and accredited. A and B tests required no special academic qualification. C Level personality tests required a degree with a major in psychology prior training and application of tests.

<sup>84</sup> Nzimande, “Corporate Guerillas”. His research was based on interviews with BPPs in the mid 1980s, some of whom were from the time period being investigated in this study.

to meet their training needs.<sup>85</sup> It was the first of its kind in South Africa and provided APPs their first opportunity, at a national level, to share their problems and express resentment over their felt discriminatory treatment by their companies. They also expressed their concern at the lack of interest and support for their problems by the IPM. These informal discussions led to their decision to form the first APP association in South Africa to meet their specific needs and resulted in the launch of the Non-European Personnel Training and Development Association of South Africa (NEPTDASA) in 1971.<sup>86</sup>

With the rapid appointment of more Black Personnel Practitioners (BPPs)<sup>87</sup> in South Africa, NEPTDASA grew and then mutated into the Personnel Management Association (PMA) in 1973, with its leadership base in Natal and with similar aims as its predecessor. Its major support base was in Natal, the Border region and the Reef. The PMA later continued its rejection of the IPM as representative of black interests and needs, which left some BPPs divided in their affiliation between the PMA and the IPM. Some joined the IPM, others did not. This rejection by a body of BPPs into the mid-1990s created a division in their ranks with one section supporting the PMA, others being prepared to join the IPM and the balance remaining unaligned. Despite the PMA's failure to establish itself as a fully representative national voice for BPPs, and its relatively low membership, it represented an influential view which was taken seriously in the more conservatively orientated business circles of the IPM. The early members of the 'class of Fort Hare'

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<sup>85</sup> The course was organised by Professor W Backer who continued with these courses on an annual basis for a number of years. One outcome of the course was a book by Backer of case studies which had been presented by delegates at the courses from their own work situations together with solutions that had been discussed at the course. W Backer, *African Case Studies: Management Development*. (Johannesburg. McGraw Hill, 1976). The researcher interviewed Backer on his understanding of the causes for the founding of NEPTDASA, of which he was unaware at the time of the first course.: 26/8/03

<sup>86</sup> Information based on interviews in 1998 by the researcher with one of the original attendees.

<sup>87</sup> The term "black" is introduced as more appropriate from the 1970s onwards as its usage became common parlance during the 1970s.



included later prominent names, such as, J B Magwaza, Wells Ntuli, Lot Ndlovu and Felix Dlamini, and others, who later emerged as senior company executives in South Africa.

It was not until 1972 that a first article by a black contributor appeared in *Personnel Management*. Ben Mokoatle reflected some of the frustration of BPPs when he declared that:

It is sad to note that many qualified Black men are frequently used in a small way, in a small personnel job. Somebody once said: 'It is a very sad thing when you have a college graduate performing like a moron on a Mickey Mouse job'. The man is under-employed and therefore de-motivated.<sup>88</sup>

He went on to appeal to management to recognise the “well nigh indispensable role” played by BPPs, whom he argued should be seen as being able to contribute to the effectiveness of the organisation, rather than just as a “grapevine”. This vocalisation represented a growing acceptance that major labour changes were demanded in South Africa and that BPPs should be allowed to participate meaningfully in the changes required. These changes would in fact be forced on both management and the government in the next decade, in which BPPs would play an increasingly important role.

### **Signs of Broader Issues to Come Facing the Practice of Personnel Management**

As international pressure on the apartheid government built up in the first years the 1970s, and multinational companies began to be pressurised to withdraw from South Africa, a new dimension without precedent emerged attached to the personnel management function. Some of the more progressive, and often multinational companies, recognising the

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<sup>88</sup> Ben Mokoatle, “Improving Labour Productivity in South Africa: The Role of the Non-White Personnel Officer.” *Personnel Management*, 23, 4 (1972). First delivered at a meeting to establish NEPTDASA in the Transvaal. Mokoatle was African Labour Consultant at S A Breweries.

disinvestment forces building up as opposition to the apartheid government grew, began to make serious attempts to improve their all round employment conditions, thereby justifying their continued investment in South Africa. The multinational Palabora Mining Company (PMC) in Phalaborwa is illustrative of this trend.

In December 1972, PMC, prompted by parent Rio Tinto Zinc, made a unique decision to appoint an independent panel of prominent persons “to prepare a report evaluating employment conditions at PMC in light of current thinking on the responsibility of management towards employees in a South African context.”<sup>89</sup> The Panel was empowered to undertake a comprehensive study and to ask for any information it required. The Panel comprised Dr C F Beyers-Naude, L C G Douwes-Dekker, Prof L Schlemmer, Chief M G Buthelezi, Prof H W E Ntsanwisi and Dr W H Thomas. B Khoapa was co-opted. At the time of the study, PMC provided family housing in the neighbouring Namaqkale township for its African staff, by special arrangement with the authorities. White staff lived in company houses in Phalaborwa. The mine had its own hospital on site. It was technically a successful mine but dependent on fluctuations in the copper price.

The final report was published in 1973 in book form, as a public document.<sup>90</sup> It provides a detailed case study of employment conditions in a multi-national mining operation and resulted in PMC setting new standards in employment benefits especially in a mining environment. The study included an analysis of the wider community environment within which the company operated to provide a setting for the study. The Panel did not recommend a strategy of withdrawal from South Africa, but made proposals about

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<sup>89</sup> W H Thomas (Compiler), Management Responsibility and African Employment in South Africa (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1973). The researcher was employed at PMC as a result of this study as their Senior Community Development Officer with a mandate to implement certain of the recommendations.

<sup>90</sup> Thomas, Management Responsibility.

improving wages, employment conditions and increased contributions to “macro-economic development” For example, minimum wages were to be above the regional Poverty Datum Line (PDL); the introduction of a job evaluation scheme to ensure an equitable basis for the upward mobility and equal pay for Africans; the introduction of a comprehensive medical benefit scheme and a pension fund for all African employees; actively to facilitate the upward promotion and advancement of Africans; the introduction of a comprehensive community welfare scheme; the re-structuring of the personnel department to allow for the appointment of black staff. The end result was that PMC moved ahead of most companies in its employment conditions

The responsibility for the study lay with the Personnel Manager, as did the implementation of the recommendations. The study offered a model for other multi-national companies who began to feel the need to justify their continued presence in South Africa and provided an illustration of the role personnel departments could play in a rapidly changing context in the country which was bringing about significant changes in personnel practice. The PMC personnel function found themselves among the forerunners in a uniquely South African dimension of professional personnel service whereby practitioners were called upon to extend their function to include a wide range of employee and community services, such as literacy training and family housing benefits.

### **Concluding Comments**

The early stages of the process of the professionalisation of human resource management has been observed in this period. The first three stages of professionalisation are noted, even if they may appear to be at the early developmental phase, requiring greater maturity which could come with further experience. The first stage is noted with the emergence of a recognisable and accepted full-time occupation in personnel management. The second

stage is the establishment of specific tertiary education with the launch of the post-graduate course at Rhodes University College, approved by the British Institute. This was followed by the introduction of the IPM Diploma. The third stage was the establishment of a professional association, again approved by a parent body in Great Britain. Much of the early initiative in this process is a result of the pioneering role of Isobel White whilst involved with her personnel research at LIRI, the introduction of the Post-Graduate Personnel Diploma and the launching of the IPM in port Elizabeth. All three may be viewed as turning points in the future development of personnel management in South Africa. The fact of her being a woman adds significance to its historical contribution.

The arrival of Simon Biesheuvel and the launch of the NIPR introduced a personnel research contribution of international status. The NIPR research provided the basis for professional testing of a range of prospective and incumbent employees who would best fit the requirements of the jobs or placements for which the test were designed. The international level of the research meant that personnel practitioners had at their disposal professionally researched tools to provide a superior service within their organisations. Bebb (1978) maintained that the two main influences on the professional development of personnel management in South Africa, were the IPM and the NIPR. Coupled with the contributions of both White and Biesheuvel, and the events surrounding them, there grew the academic discipline of industrial psychology, which found strong exponents in the Afrikaans universities. Industrial psychology provided academic application to personnel management of the social sciences during this period, to the point where, near the end of the period, the most common qualification for a position in a personnel department was a degree with one or more social science majors.

Sutton's leadership in 1966 to push the process of professionalisation forward with improved administrative services by the IPM was a further initiative, resulting by 1970, with a full-time IPM Director being appointed to drive the process. The decision in 1971

by the IPM to launch its own three year Diploma in Personnel or Training Management, which provided access to all racial groups, may be regarded as a reinforcement of the process of professionalisation.

There is no recorded attempt by the IPM to address the implications of the race issue. The probable reason lies in the Institute being comprised largely of white members. Only towards the end of the 1960s was there a major effort to recruit African staff into companies at personnel officer level, which changed the race profile of personnel practitioners. There are no IPM figures available to reveal the numbers of African members up to 1970. By 1970 a first conscious decision was noted in the launch of the Diploma, to encourage African membership. However, the events recorded signal a growing frustration and resentment on the part of BPPs who felt they were being discriminated against by their companies and white colleagues which would influence relationships in the future.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE GROWTH OF PROFESSIONALISATION IN A PERIOD OF NEW CHALLENGES : 1973 - 1983**

The chapter will note and evaluate a range of events influencing the development of personnel management and the progress of the professionalisation of personnel practice in the period 1973-1983. A background to the period is outlined and the new era in industrial relations that emerged during this time is discussed. The chapter records trends in personnel management, the developments in personnel education and training and the first attempt at obtaining statutory recognition for personnel practice. Further attempts by black practitioners to develop their own independent association are presented. The chapter concludes with an assessment of the progress of professionalisation of personnel practice.

#### **Background to the Period 1973-1983**

Socio-political-economic events in South Africa impacted on personnel management in organisations and the most notable of these are mentioned as background to the adjustments that followed in personnel practice.

The Durban strikes in January and February of 1973 had national importance as they signalled the re-entry of black trade unions into the industrial relations equation.<sup>1</sup> The strikes forced companies to deal with trade unions which thereafter grew rapidly in numbers and militancy. In Durban, three months after the strikes, the Institute for Industrial Education (IIE) was launched to provide training and education in trade unionism for workers. Although the Urban Training Project (UTP) had been started in

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<sup>1</sup> The term "industrial relations" is inter-changeable with "labour relations" in this study and no effort is made to enter into debate over the most appropriate term.



Johannesburg in 1970, ostensibly to assist workers with the committee system, it also provided training in trade union activity, but it was the IIE that provided a more radical thrust to the renewal of black trade unionism. In 1974 the first publication of the monthly S A Labour Bulletin (SALB) appeared, a journal which provided articles, often of an academic nature, presenting a worker and socialist perspective on labour matters.<sup>2</sup> This period of labour history led to saw numerous publications telling the story of the struggles of the new independent trade union movement and providing statistics of its phenomenal growth in both members and numbers of unregistered trade unions.<sup>3</sup> Militant black unionism was to be one of a number of factors during this period that brought about major adjustments in personnel practice and labour legislation in South Africa.

During the early 1970s the government continued vigorously to enforce its separate development policy. This is illustrated by the number of recorded pass law offences. In the year 1972-73, 515 608 cases of pass law offences were processed through the nation's courts.<sup>4</sup> This translated to an average of 1983 cases per day for the year. Removals from proclaimed 'white' areas continued unabated with a total of over 3.5 million people being moved between 1960-83. The cost of administering the apartheid state and its laws required in the region of 540 000 white public sector employees, with 90% of all top positions being occupied by Afrikaners and in the region of 820 000 black civil servants.<sup>5</sup> It was within this socio-political structure that personnel management operated and which

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<sup>2</sup> J. Maree (ed.), The Independent Trade Unions: 1974 - 1984. Ten Years of the SA Labour Bulletin (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987), provides a history of the SA Labour Bulletin.

<sup>3</sup> See for example Steven Friedman, Building Tomorrow Today: African Workers in Trade Unions: 1970 - 1984 (Cape Town: Galvin and Sales, 1987) and J. Maree, The Independent Trade Unions. 1974-1984 (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1987).

<sup>4</sup> M. Horrell, D. Horner and J. Hudson, A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa (Johannesburg: SAIRR, 1975), p.171. See also, The Star in a series of articles on Pass Laws referred to the processing of pass law offences, as "conveyor belt justice", 3, 4, 5 July 1973.

<sup>5</sup> L. Thompson, A History of South Africa (Wynberg: Sandton. Radix, 1990).

required numerous time consuming administrative labour control procedures to comply with government employment legislation. Many of the newly appointed BPPs were required to apply the various deeply resented apartheid labour registration procedures.<sup>6</sup>

The Soweto youth revolt in 1976 was a symptom of growing black unrest. The student revolt had an effect on labour relations. A new dynamic was released into the socio-political environment and a subtle shift in influence was experienced in the work place where a gradual change in the worker profile emerged. Young black workers, often began to refer to themselves as “the class of 76” and this influence added fervour to the militancy of the growing black labour movement.<sup>7</sup> In 1977 the BLRRA Act was again amended, this time to allow black workers, through the now largely discredited committee system, to negotiate binding agreements. It was to be the government’s last effort, prior to conceding to pressure to open the way for full black trade union rights. Responding to the government move, the Financial Mail commented in an article, “The key to industrial peace in South Africa lies in trade unionism for Africans... the sooner the government stops tinkering with an obsolete system, the better.”<sup>8</sup>

In 1977 in a climate of unprecedented growing black trade union membership and militancy, the government established the Wiehahn Commission to investigate all aspects of labour legislation. It was a concession by the government to the unworkableness of their current labour policies. By 1979 the first of five Wiehahn Commission Reports was released, which in 1981 resulted in major changes in labour law and allowed official

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<sup>6</sup> The term “black” is now used in the study in preference to the earlier “African” as this had become a term of choice.

<sup>7</sup> Nzimande, “Corporate Guerillas”, p.310.

<sup>8</sup> Financial Mail, “A Formula for Chaos.” 1 April 1977.

recognition of black trade unions.<sup>9</sup> Freedom of association, union autonomy, abolition of job reservation, apprenticeships open to all races, and the introduction of an Industrial Court to deal with fairness in labour practice were among the major changes to emerge.

The changes came into force with the new Labour Relations Act in 1981, replacing the Industrial Conciliation Act and repealing the Bantu Labour Relations Amendment Act. The changes were welcomed by industry, but were criticised by the emerging black trade union movement and certain labour academics for not going far enough. Four other reports were released over the next few years, all of which initiated further changes, but none as comprehensive and significant as the first report. The outcome of the Wiehahn Commission was to start a process of dismantling some of the long standing apartheid legacy entrenched in legislation. Personnel managers had now to lead their organisations through the adjustments required by the new legislation and to handle industrial relations disputes referred to the new established Industrial Court

By 1979 there were twenty seven organised black trade unions, which were receiving significant input from a number of young activists, some of the most prominent of whom, significantly, were white. In the same year the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) was formed out of a number of these unions and by 1981 there were nine affiliated unions with 95 000 members.<sup>10</sup> In 1980 another federation emerged, the Council of Unions of SA (CUSA), which by 1983 comprised twelve affiliates and 160 000 members. New workers coming onto the labour market were younger, more educated,

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<sup>9</sup> Commission of Enquiry into Labour Legislation, 1979 (commonly referred to as the Wiehahn Commission) and comment by Prof N E Wiehahn in "The Regulation of Labour Relations in a Changing South Africa"- a paper presented by Wiehahn to P E Consulting IR Course, 3 -5 April 1979, outlining the principles guiding the commission and wherein he explained the six rights of labour which formed the cornerstone of the new dispensation the Commission was proposing, among which were the right of association, to bargain and withhold labour. Copy of paper in researcher's private files..

<sup>10</sup> Baskin, "Striking Back", p.29.

more militant and often accompanied by a sense of black consciousness. This change was illustrated in the high profile Ford Motor strikes in Port Elizabeth in 1979.<sup>11</sup> The strikes also illustrated a new trend where youthful militancy was observed with political, social and community issues being intertwined. These other dimensions could no longer be separated from workplace.<sup>12</sup> The 1970s saw the foundations being laid for a very different labour relations environment

By the late 1970s the government was losing the battle to maintain the apartheid state. There was a net emigration of white skilled and professional persons which affected the economy adversely. The United Nations passed a mandatory embargo on the sale of arms to South Africa. The Homeland administration was in a disastrous condition. The black population was increasing at a much faster pace than that of the whites. By 1978, the government was in trouble as the cost of maintaining the apartheid state was increasing. White Rhodesians, who were supported by South Africa, were losing the war against the various groups of Rhodesian black insurgents. The National Party in that year was tainted by the so-called "Information Scandal", which reached to President Vorster, who had to resign, only to be replaced by P W Botha, who found it nigh impossible to preside over the dismantlement of apartheid.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Fred Ferreira, Ford's Industrial Relations Director, in an address to the Natal Branch of the IPM 15/7/1980, explained that in an analysis of the strikes, age distribution in the two plants involved, appeared to be a feature. The Cortina plant with the "younger, higher educated and average shorter period of service employees, was much more militant." Researcher's own private file of notes and newspaper cuttings of the Ford strikes.

<sup>12</sup> Rand Daily Mail, 29/11/1979, quoted Ferreira, "Workers did not differentiate between industrial issues and political issues. Because there was no political channels acceptable to blacks, a lot of grievances are bound to flow over into the industrial channels." See also, Baskin, Striking Back, p.25. "The Ford strike signalled the beginning of a new type of unionism, linked to community and with a more militant political profile

<sup>13</sup> Thompson, A History of South Africa, p.199.

Union growth, increasing militancy and tactically organised strikes were features of the late 1970s and early 1980s. By 1981 the police were detaining union leaders. The death of Dr Neil Aggett, the secretary of the Transvaal branch of the African Fruit and Canning Workers Union (AFCWU), in a police cell in February 1982 acted as a catalyst bringing a united front among unions with differing ideological positions into a mass protest strike. Significantly, employer bodies agreed not to act against strikers. The Federated Chamber of Industries (FCI), the Association of Chambers of Commerce (ASSOCOM) and the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of SA (SEIFSA) agreed to recommend to members not to act against those taking part. It was another watershed in labour relations as the government was faced, not only with international protests, but a protest that employers agreed with as well. This time the protest went further than the black protests against the death in police custody of black consciousness leader, Steve Biko in 1977.

### **A New Era in Industrial Relations Begins**

The wave of strikes by black workers in Durban took place during the first three months of 1973 ushering in a new era in industrial relations. During that period around 160 strikes took place involving about 62 000 African workers from 160 companies.<sup>14</sup> Employers appeared to have been taken by surprise by the apparent spontaneity of the strikes. Worker strikes were not a new phenomenon in South Africa as numerous texts on the history of industrial relations in South Africa record periodic strikes by workers in the main industrial centres of the country so the strikes ought not to have been unexpected.<sup>15</sup> From 1968 to

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<sup>14</sup> D B Horner (ed), "Labour Organisation and the African Worker" Proceedings of a workshop held by the Natal Region of the SA Institute of Race Relations held on 7/3/1974 involving 90 delegates from various organisations. (Johannesburg: SAIRR. 1975).

<sup>15</sup> For example, K. Jubber, Industrial Relations and Industrial Sociology (Cape Town: Juta, 1979) and Eddie Webster (ed), Essays in Southern African Labour History (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1978).

1971 the number of recorded strikes had grown from 1704 to 8814. In 1972, 2000 stevedores had gone on strike in Durban. The unexpectedness may be found in the low priority given to industrial relations by both the State and Employers, and by implication, personnel managers.

Strikes by “bantu” workers were illegal at the time in terms of existing legislation. The statistics quoted above, however, reveal a decreasing fear of striking by black workers. Government harassment and repressive legislation during the 1950s and 1960s had diminished the membership and power of black unions and by 1964 the South African Council of Trade Unions (SACTU), which had been an organising force among black trade unions, was forced underground. By 1969 many black unions had disappeared with only 16 040 members left in the remaining thirteen unions.<sup>16</sup>

An analysis of the causes of the strikes revealed important matters requiring immediate attention. Low wages appeared as the most immediate cause. For example, at Corobrick, where workers had not had an increase in minimum wage since 1967, the strikers wanted an increase from their minimum wage of R8-9 pw to R20 pw. In contrast, at the large Unilever manufacturing plant at Maydon Wharf, where workers did not go out on strike, the minimum wage was R18.50 pw.<sup>17</sup> In the textile industry wages between 1955 and 1969 increased by 13.2%, while cost of living as measured by the CPI rose 40.8%.<sup>18</sup>

Black workers were becoming increasingly frustrated with the available representative channels of communication for matters of concern to them and the lack of meaningful

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<sup>16</sup> M A Horrell, South African Workers: Their Organisation and Patterns of Employment. (Johannesburg: SAIRR, 1969).

<sup>17</sup> Financial Mail, 16 February 1973

<sup>18</sup> M A Horrell, South African Workers.



results on worker issues. While works or liaison committees existed in a number of work places, these bodies were largely paternalistic, dealing with marginal issues. The worker representatives were either nominated by management, elected or a mixture of both, but did have available a forum of demand as later emerged with unions. Wages, which were the prime issue, were not negotiable, although they may have been raised as an agenda item. The conditions appeared ready for the re-emergence of unionism. Not all companies had failed to improve communication structures. Some companies made pioneering efforts many years earlier, to improve communication. The Dunlop plant in Durban, by 1966, had established separate works committees for its race groups, which dealt with a range of issues including debate on wage issues, but not negotiation, as the committees had no leverage.

One study of the 1973 Durban strikes identified their significance “as a major event in South African social history”, and maintained that, “The strikes were largely successful. The workers did not have their initial demands satisfied, but nearly all of them did gain appreciable wage increases.”<sup>19</sup> The study, utilising first hand reports, suggests that, for example, the Corobrick strike, had the appearance of good worker organisation and the acceptance by the workers of the risks involved. Many personnel managers, especially in the smaller companies, were ill prepared for this new era of industrial relations as may be observed from the numerous articles appearing in *People and Profits*, the many seminars which were organised on industrial relations, as well as in the of the IPM annual Convention theme in 1974, entitled, “Interface: The Challenge of Black-White Labour Relations in Southern Africa” which attracted over 500 delegates, the largest attendance to date ever.

The government’s response to the labour unrest was to pass the Bantu Labour Relations

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<sup>19</sup> G. P Mare, The Durban Strikes 1973 (Durban: Institute for Industrial Education. 1974), p.6.

Regulations Amendment Act (No 70 of 1973) (BLRRA) to reinforce their commitment to the so-called “committee system” in an effort to ward off the development of black trade unions. The employers attitude to the demands may be found in the advice of the Chamber of Industries to managers. “Do not attempt to bargain, as this will encourage the Bantu to escalate his demands. Action must be positive, definite and final.” The public response to the revelation of the actual wages being paid may be seen in the Afrikaans press which accused employers of paying “skokende lone”. (shocking wages)<sup>20</sup>

Following the BLRRA amendment, the Institute of Personnel Management (IPM), encouraged companies to assist in improving in-company communication with black workers, especially through the legislated committee system. Later, in 1975 the IPM declared its support for the committee system through a letter sent to all members and signed by the President, Dave Hanson.<sup>21</sup> The letter reflects major employer support for the existing system of worker representation and explains the IPM position in the existing political dispensation.

It is the policy of the IPM to work within the existing labour laws of the country and to liaise closely with government in offering its professional expertise in labour matters.

The letter was a signal to those members wanting the IPM to play a more aggressive role in working to change existing labour legislation to achieve a more equitable labour dispensation, that the IPM was not a vanguard body attempting to led change in the social and political order. It would practice quiet diplomacy in relation to the government. It saw its main role as assisting its members in extracting the best results for their organisations from existing legislation and to aid in making the existing committee system function

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<sup>20</sup> Die Nataller, 3 February 1973.

<sup>21</sup> D. Hanson, President of the IPM, Letter to all Members, 30 June 1975. Copy in researcher's private collection.

effectively.

In May 1973 the IPM organised a seminar, in Johannesburg on guidelines for running effective committees.<sup>22</sup> One outcome of this support for the committee system and the need for improved communication was the increase in the appointment of black personnel officers (BPOs) as important “linkmen” in the communication system. This new development was dealt with in an article by John Dickerson in *People and Profits*, where, a recognised training specialist, he called for improved selection and training for BPOs.<sup>23</sup> He identified a tendency in some companies to employ these BPOs as “window dressing” to convince observers that the company was doing something about the better use of black labour. This need for the greater contribution by BPOs highlighted the reality of the two different worlds which existed in the work place, where white managers and black workers came from two very different and separate environments created by the apartheid society and which was complicated by language difficulties. An urgent need had arisen to increase the number of Black personnel practitioners to help bridge the gap in the work place.

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<sup>22</sup> No author given, “Works Committees that really work: Communicating with Black Employees” *People and Profits*, 1, 2. (August 1973), p.12 - 16, 21. The Minister of Labour was quoted from a speech at a labour conference in Johannesburg on 1 March 1973, called after the Durban Strikes, outlining the Government stance. “I wish to state quite unequivocally that the Government will not consider the recognition of Bantu trade unions or their organisation or affiliation in any way which is tantamount to recognition.” Two issues emerge from this statement. One, the Government’s policy use of “bantú”, whereas the IPM had moved to the use of “black”. Two, the Government’s clear rejection of legally recognised black trade unions. Chief MG Buthelezi, Chief Executive of Kwa Zulu, at the same conference, admitted to the inevitability of using the current system of representation, but only as a temporary communication channel.. “I am prepared to support works committees, as an interim measure.”

<sup>23</sup> John Dickerson, “The Linkman: Selection and Training of Black Personnel Officers.” *People and Profits*, 1, 7 (January 1974), pp.8-13,19. He called for their proper selection and training to enable them to play their full role in improved communications and other industrial relations problems. He noted that at that time only the University of Fort Hare and the University of College of the North offered specialist training courses for BPOs and that the new IPM correspondence Diploma was designed to meet their educational requirements. His article recognised the frustrations among BPOs that had brought about their creating their own association (PMA) (see previous chapter), as distinct from the IPM.

Early recognition by big business that more radical transformation was required in industrial relations came from Harry Oppenheimer, Chairman of the Anglo American Corporation (AAC). Speaking at the Annual Convention of the IPM in July 1974, he called for new thinking and for “an acceptable means to be found to provide for collective bargaining on wages and conditions of employment by black workers.”<sup>24</sup>

I do not believe the Blacks will ever be brought to accept that an organisation of labour which is regarded as right and necessary for white workers, not only in South Africa, but throughout the Western world, is not suitable for them.

The outcome of events meant that industrial relations began to dominate the personnel management agenda in a manner before unknown. The IPM as seen in this chapter, began to focus on labour issues with the result that the concept of professionalism now included much attention on the new dynamics of black issues. Articles in the new IPM journal, *People and Profits*, launched in July 1973, revealed the growing acknowledgement of the changed industrial relations scenario in South Africa. Dr Alex Boraine, the recently appointed Anglo American Corporation (AAC), high profile Black Labour Consultant, presented the AAC approach to black advancement on their mines.<sup>25</sup> He reported wages had been increased by 26 % and declared the AAC commitment to “black advancement” and training. “This whole question of wages and reward for the job is tied up with black advancement and providing opportunities for blacks to develop their abilities”. Another article dealt with black worker representation.<sup>26</sup> Four trade unionists gave their responses. Only one, Lucy Mvubelo, was black, and as General Secretary, she represented the National Union of Clothing Workers. The discussion agreed that Works and Liaison

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<sup>24</sup> The Star, 29 July 1974.

<sup>25</sup> Alex Boraine, “Anglo Sticks its Neck Out” People & Profits, 1,1( July 1973), pp.9-11.

<sup>26</sup> No author given. “Black Representation: What is the Answer?” People and Profits, 1, 1(July 1973), pp.18-24.

Committees were ineffective and that open legal unionisation of African workers was required. There is no record of the IPM publicly supporting equal status for black trade unions as existed for white unions.

**Trends in Personnel Management**

In the midst of the dramatic demands on personnel practitioners at the time to meet industrial relations challenges, an increased level of other personnel activity had begun with new trends emerging which called for skilled professional attention. These trends may be observed in an analysis of articles published in *People and Profits* from July 1973 to June 1978<sup>27</sup>. The articles indicate the issues which appeared to be of most concern to personnel practitioners. Of 495 articles published in this period and classified into 32 categories, the following topics emerge as the main areas of interest.

Training and Development	103	20.8 %
Industrial Relations	40	8.0 %
Productivity	26	5.4 %
Recruitment/Selection/Testing	26	5.4 %
Affirmative Action/Black Development	23	4.7 %
Communication Issues	23	4.7 %

The preponderance of Training and Development articles (20.8%) suggests the acknowledgment that South Africa was characterised by a chronic requirement to train and develop all levels of employees. The IPM responded to this need by creating in 1973 an Education and Training Division under the Chairmanship of John Dickerson, an

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<sup>27</sup> Appendix 4.1 details the analysis.



experienced training specialist.<sup>28</sup> A number of senior personnel practitioners who had been active members of the National Development and Management Foundation (NDMF) training panel joined the new IPM division. The IPM was becoming recognised as “providing a more professional administration, which the NDMF lacked.”<sup>29</sup> The sound administration in the IPM under its first national director, Dave Jackson, contributed to the image of a more “professional” association.

In 1973 the South African Society for Training and Development (SASTD) was formed by a group of training and development specialists, strongly based in Natal, who believed that the IPM was not adequately meeting the ‘professional’ needs of the training fraternity. Hugo Misselhorn, a founder member and strong supporter of the SASTD, explained that they had contact with the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) in the USA which had themselves separated from the general Personnel Administration body.<sup>30</sup> Education and training in the United States had moved towards a new emphasis on “human resource development” (HRD) as a more inclusive speciality and South African trainers were concerned that they needed to follow that trend. The IPM believed an affiliate relationship between SASTD and the ASTD would be detrimental to the IPM’s status as representing personnel management as a whole in South Africa, and used their own contacts to pre-empt its becoming the South African affiliate of the ASTD.<sup>31</sup> The SASTD was a sign of the growth of specialist segments within personnel management that were

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<sup>28</sup> Dickerson had been Chairman of the NDMF Training Panel since 1967, which comprised senior training and personnel specialists from leading companies, such as Mike Renton (Goldfields), Willie Nel (Anglo American), Peter Frost (Edgars). The NDMF had been the pioneering business funded training organisation since the 1960s providing a range of training programmes for managers and others requiring development in the interests of industry and commerce.

<sup>29</sup> John Dickerson, interview with researcher, 26/8/2003.

<sup>30</sup> Hugo Misselhorn, interview with researcher, 13/11/1998..

<sup>31</sup> Dickerson,, interview, 26/8/2003.



demanding greater specialist development in order to meet the increased demands being placed upon specialist trainers. Training covered a wide range of specialists areas, from literacy, to operator training, to supervisory and management skills, and a growing emphasis on organisational development (OD). The recognition that whites could no longer meet the skilled job vacancies became for employers an increasing frustration with government policy, as they found it more and more impossible to limit blacks in white areas to the less skilled jobs.

The article analysis revealed Industrial Relations (8.0%) was the next most prominent topic, which is not unexpected following the Durban strikes where there emerged a call for greater skill in handling the new labour era. Many articles under the “training and development” category, either wholly or in part, dealt with industrial relations training issues. The demand for specialist training, ongoing development of all levels of people, and need for industrial relations literature became a growth industry. For example, in response to this need, the Institute of Industrial Relations (IIR), funded and managed jointly by big business interests and unions in the Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA) (ie., representing registered unions, mostly white led), was established to provide specialist IR guidance and skills training. UNISA established the Institute of Labour Relations in 1976 under Professors Blackie Swart and Willie Bendix, two recognised labour law academics and began offering short IR courses and ultimately a one year diploma in labour relations. They launched the SA Journal of Labour Relations in 1977 to meet the need for a specialist journal on industrial relations. These initiatives are illustrative of developments by other agencies who contributed to the call for skilled input to meeting the new specialist needs in a very formative period in South Africa.

Productivity (5.4%) and Recruitment, Selection and Testing (5.4%), although not a high percentage of articles, are an indication that these traditional ongoing functions still required that personnel practitioners should remain up to date on the latest developments in

these areas. would meet the required of them.. They still needed to show a high level of professional competence in these functions to justify their existence.

Affirmative Action and Black Development (4.7%) were linked in the analysis due to the understanding within the IPM that they were two sides of the same process. Some articles within the Training and Development category dealt with these two critical topics.

Communication (4.7%) was perceived to be a major issue influencing productivity and industrial relations. Numerous articles in *People and Profits* during the early 1970s suggested answers lay in improved communication between workers and management. Considerable effort was exerted to improve communication, ranging from "Know your African Worker"<sup>32</sup>, to literacy training projects,<sup>33</sup> to sophisticated development programmes for managers.

The analysis of the articles indicate that the personnel function was organised to comply with the existing state order and development of professionalism took place within that framework.

During the late 1960s and the 1970s a pattern emerged where personnel managers began

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<sup>32</sup> Bruno Bruniquel and J B Magwaza, "Know your African Worker" *People and Profits*, 2, 5 (November 1974), pp.9-13. An outline of the Audio-Visual presentation researched and presented by the authors for managers, foreman and supervisors to help create an understanding of cultural features of African life with the aim of improving communication and relations in the work place. The presentation and ensuing discussion proved to be popular and helpful in many companies.

<sup>33</sup> No author given, "Communication Breakthrough in Industry" *People and Profits*, 1, 8 (December, 1973), pp.5-9. The Arnold-Varty System of teaching English to black workers, pioneered by Alan Arnold and Alice Varty and launched in 1959, was a South African designed method used in many companies, such as Shell/BP, General Mining, Alcan to improve communication. "Operation Upgrade" used in some companies, was a further long standing literacy training project funded by the private sector.

using development programmes from overseas.<sup>34</sup> Most of these programmes arose from research by behavioural scientists in the USA in the 1950s and 1960s. Among the first to appear in the 1960s was the Management by Objectives (MBO) approach to managing. In the 1970s numerous behavioural science based management development programmes were implemented by leading companies. For example, the Blake and Mouton Managerial Grid, for developing managerial leadership and team building was introduced at OK Bazaars in 1971. By 1973 the company reported that as a result there had been a drop in absenteeism and a substantial boost in turnover and productivity.<sup>35</sup> In 1972, Edgars contracted Prof Bill Byham from the USA, to assist in improving their management selection and development using his assessment techniques to select for potential.<sup>36</sup> Behaviour Assessment and Behaviour Modelling became popular in many companies at the same time. In 1974 Rank Xerox. introduced these techniques for assessing man-management ability by behaviour analysis as a prelude to management skills development.<sup>37</sup> The company credited the new assessment technique with its success in developing management skills .

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<sup>34</sup> The Editorial in People and Profits ,1, 4 (October 1973), lampooned this tendency under the heading "Packaged Personnelity". "Packaged deals are seized upon and blindly implemented with little or no thought as to what they are meant to achieve, other than to boost the image of the personnel department. And invariably these techniques fail. This lowers their credibility in the eyes of line managers, who dismiss them as 'theory'. And this lowers the credibility of the personnel function."

<sup>35</sup> No Author given, People and Profits, "Management in the Market Place: Increased Profits at O K Bazaars." 1, 1 (July 1973), pp.3-7. First introduced in 1968 in South Africa, the "Grid's" popularity may be gauged by the fact that by 1973 over 450 managers had attended "Grid" training seminars. A similar model introduced to South Africa was William Reddin's "Three Dimensional Model of Managerial Effectiveness" on building interpersonal skills, which did not receive the same acceptance, although reportedly as effective in management development. Integral to both these models is the search to find an acceptable balance between the needs of people and the productivity requirements of the organisation.

<sup>36</sup> No author given, People and Profits, "Identifying Tomorrows Managers: Edgar's Builds a Top Team." 1, 2 (August 1973) , pp.26 - 33,36. The Old Mutual, S A Breweries and Afrox were also reported to have introduced the Byham technique of what was referred to as "Assessment Centres".

<sup>37</sup> No author given, People and Profits, "Developing Interactive Skills." 2, 3 (September 1974), pp.17-18, 23-27,38.

The invitation to Frederick Herzberg, the leading American researcher on motivation, as keynote speaker at the IPM Annual Convention in July 1973, was a further example.<sup>38</sup> 'Motivation' at the time was believed to be a critical area for attention in organisations. The emphasis on 'motivation' is found in the IPM Diploma launched in 1973, where *Motivation* was offered as a full course. In 1975, *People and Profits* ran a five part series on "Behaviour Modelling" by Mel Sorcher as this was the "in" skill to develop to achieve greater results through people<sup>39</sup>. By 1979 considerable interest had been shown in the Hersey and Blanchard "Situational Leadership" model, which contrasts two styles of management behaviour.<sup>40</sup> The traditional authoritarian model of a leader who directs operations is contrasted with the non-directive democratic style leader who creates a more participative style of management which allows for greater concern for individuals and their contribution.

These programmes, based on more flexible leadership models, led the way to moving the traditional South African autocratic management style to a more participative approach. Personnel management could take the credit for having achieved constructive results. The introduction in the 1970s of these new techniques brought South African personnel management in line with the most progressive overseas methods available and was a further expression of the developing professionalism of personnel management. Any hope that

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<sup>38</sup> No author given, *People and Profits*, "The Inimitable Herzberg." An interview with the man whose "theories on employee motivation have most influenced management's thinking across the world in the past decade." 2, 3 (September 1973), p.6 -12.

<sup>39</sup> Mel Sorcher, "Behaviour Modelling: A New Approach to Supervisory Training." *People and Profits*, 2,11; 3,1; 3,2; 3,4 (May 1975 - July, August, October 1975). Sorcher describes his interactive skills techniques for supervisors in his focus on the development of key behaviours, with reference to companies where it had been introduced. The final article ran under the title of "Interaction Management" which became a common name for variations of the methods described.

<sup>40</sup> Westcott, M, "Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard's Situational Leadership." *People and Profits*, 7, 3 (1979), pp.10- 12.



these new management techniques would bring significant relief to the conflictual and increasingly polarised workplace, did not materialise. The central issue to be resolved was dismantling the segregationist racial-political structure of the country and until that was done, black workers and the largely white management levels would not achieve the desired working relations. However, these techniques did raise the skill level of management to deal more sensitively with the unique South African labour and racial issues and laid the foundation for later abilities to deal with sensitive issues. In this respect personnel management played a palliative role in easing relationships. Personnel management was not geared to solving the ultimate problem of workplace relationships created by government policy. The 1970s may be seen as a period of intense activity by personnel managers to modernise management development.

The IPM Annual themes are another valuable indicator of trends in personnel management. Conventions themes and topics dealt with important issues of the day for personnel practitioners and were used by the IPM to signal future directions in personnel practice. Conventions world-wide are used to update professionals and signal future directions in their field of professional expertise. An investigation of the themes of the 1974 and 1977 conventions was undertaken as a way of analysing the main developments occurring in personnel management.<sup>41</sup>

The IPM Annual Convention in 1974 was attended by a record 500 delegates, revealing the importance practitioners gave to the Convention. The theme, "Interface: The Challenge of Black/White Labour Relations in Southern Africa" shows a concern to find a way through the damaging effects of apartheid legislation in industrial relations and to provide constructive methods of confronting the new labour era.

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<sup>41</sup> A comprehensive list of all known convention themes is found in Appendix 3.5 In "Table of Historical Information"

The Convention was addressed by a number of high profile speakers focussing on the theme, including Harry Oppenheimer, the Chairman of the Anglo American Corporation Oppenheimer, who injected a note of urgency into the deliberations.<sup>42</sup> His support for black unions, able to negotiate on behalf of workers was a signal to government that big business had come to a new stance on a critical issue, namely, the need to recognise black unions. He urged the setting up of a small commission of experts, representing all parties, to meet and plan for “effective representation for all workers.” Two black speakers, Wilby Baqwa, IR Officer for Roberts Construction and Wells Ntuli, President of the black Personnel Management Association (PMA), challenged delegates to address the problems of black workers. At the time the IPM was confronted by strong resentment from black personnel practitioners, who had formed the breakaway PMA<sup>43</sup>.

The inclusion of recognised black speakers suggests the IPM saw the need to introduce a non-racial image, which was difficult with a mostly white, and often conservative, membership. The Financial Mail commented: “One handicap the Conference experienced was that, except for a handful of Black personnel experts, the 500 plus faces were those of white management.”<sup>44</sup> (See Independent Black PMA section later in this Chapter for analysis of underlying issues). Tommy Vogel, a Personnel Director from Natal, in his address to the Convention dealt with ways of breaking through job reservation and establishing race equality in the work place. He observed that after the presentation he was labelled as “pink” by IPM members who held a pro-government segregationist position,

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<sup>42</sup> The Star, 29 July 1974.

<sup>43</sup> The PMA developments are investigated later in this chapter..

<sup>44</sup> Financial Mail, 2 August 1974, under the heading, “Interface: A Watershed. There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood, leads to fortune..And if not?”. Aptly summarised the dilemma for personnel management at the convention.



implying he had leftist tendencies and should be distanced.<sup>45</sup> This reaction is indicative of divisions among IPM members over government legislation, between those who supported it and those that wanted rapid movement by government away from its apartheid based labour policies.

In his closing address to the Convention, Dave Jackson, IPM executive director, summarised the discussions by calling for a more co-ordinated and accelerated national labour policy to meet the industrial challenge facing the country.<sup>46</sup> The actions outlined related directly to the impracticalness of existing government labour policies. Jackson called for the Government to create a Manpower Advisory Council representative of all stakeholders in labour matters, which would include, government, employers, trade union groups and representatives of black opinion. This body would need to formulate a National Manpower Plan and a Labour Policy which would give clear direction on the major problems facing both public and private sector interests. He explained that much inaction on black advancement was caused by uncertainty as to the Government's attitude and fear of reprisals by the authorities. The 'archaic' legislation on job reservation needed to be addressed as a priority to allow for proper skills development of all persons in the interests of economic development. "The need for investment in the development of the human resources in Southern Africa is immediate", he said. This Annual Convention was probably the most significant since the inception of IPM conventions

The IPM had entered now into a serious national debate with political implications, and for

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<sup>45</sup> T E Vogel, . "Practical Problems of Unifying Conditions of Employment in the South African Context". Address to 1974 IPM Convention. Paper in researcher's private files. Also interview by researcher with Vogel, 11/11/1998. 'Pink' in political terms in South Africa, suggested the person was a fellow traveller with the communists and was not to be trusted by those supporting the apartheid government and anti-communists elements in other parties and preferably was not to be associated with.

<sup>46</sup> Dave Jackson, Closing Address. IPM Interface Convention. People and Profits, 2, 4 (October 1974), pp 2-3,5.

the first time produced a definite plan of action to address an issue of government policy. Previously, the IPM, aware of the broad spectrum of political opinion among its members, adopted a low profile on sensitive matters of government labour policies. To launch a high profile public appeal to the Government was unprecedented. It showed, not only a new found confidence in the IPM's growing status, but would also illustrate the role that the IPM could play in the broader socio-economic context when the interests of the business community was being adversely affected by government policies.

These developments raise a unique South African dimension to the process of professionalisation. For the first time the IPM had openly entered the political arena. It was a business imperative and in the interests of business to deal with the hindrance to business growth brought on by government policies. The basis of intervention was business interest, rather than a concern over the ethics of racial discrimination. There may have been those who perceived the issues in moral terms of working towards the eradication of the indignities of apartheid, but that was not obvious from available information. The unanswered question is, did the process of the professionalisation of personnel practice in South Africa include an obligation on the personnel practitioner to work actively to remove apartheid in the work place? No record could be found of this issue having been raised or this perception of professionalism having been discussed.

Some of the enhanced stature of the IPM at the time was attributed to the appointment of Dave Jackson as full-time executive director in December 1969. His leadership had given the IPM the direction it required to produce a more professional service for its members. Sutton believed that Jackson's marketing skills had helped the IPM begin to project an image of a professional body and, as a result, had begun to generate the money needed to

run a successful national office, catering for its members needs.<sup>47</sup> It was the vision Sutton had propagated in 1966 and other Presidents had later encouraged.

The 1974 Convention had expressed the belief that the IPM should focus on industrial relations as a specific priority. This commitment to finding solutions for South Africa's industrial relations problems led the IPM to organise an open meeting in October 1974<sup>48</sup>. Chaired by Dr Simon Biesheuvel, some 200 delegates representing major employers, employer organisations, registered trade unions and unregistered black trade unions and government committee representatives attended. The delegates agreed to establish a Steering Committee to take forward action proposals which could deal effectively with the serious industrial relations issues facing the country. The IPM agreed that "the principle of representation of all parties concerned would be adhered to and the relevant government departments would be kept informed of all developments and invited to participate."<sup>49</sup> The IPM insisted that its role was to finding solutions on a participative basis. These developments placed the IPM, as an association representing personnel managers in South Africa, in a high profile role, never previously experienced. This higher profile was continued late in 1974 with Jackson's pioneering three-minute SABC morning radio talks on industrial relations and personnel issues, which proved increasingly popular, as they spoke to issues sensitive to government policy.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Sutton, interview with researcher, 12/5/03. This perception is supported by Dickerson: 26/8/2003.

<sup>48</sup> No author given, "Action on Industrial Relations." People and Profits, 2,5 (November 1974), p 3.

<sup>49</sup> Jackson, Closing Address, p.3-4..

<sup>50</sup> The popularity of these programmes was confirmed by Dickerson, 26/8/2003. Because of their appeal, Jackson was asked by the IPM Council to attempt to be on air at least twice per month as it raised the profile of the IPM considerably.

The high expectations of action, following the Convention and the meeting of IR representatives gradually diminished and the IPMs leadership role on industrial relations issues faded. Two explanations may be offered for the fall away. The more government supporting elements in the IPM gained a stronger voice as may be noted by the tone of the letter the President, Dave Hanson, wrote to members on 30 June 1975 and referred to earlier (page 86). Second, Dave Jackson, who had led much of the change process in IPM style, left the IPM as Executive Director, for reasons other than his political inclinations.

The second convention chosen for analysis was held in 1977 and was selected due to its uniqueness as 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention with the symbolism of coming of age. Garry Whyte, the IPM president, addressed the theme “Quo Vadis ? Where are you Going”? It suggested that personnel management had come of age in South Africa and prompted delegates to consider what was to be the contribution of the personnel practitioner in the changing dynamics of the apartheid state?

The Convention Chairman, Johann Coetzee, in summing up the convention said, “The personnel manager of the late 1970s will directly influence organisation profits and efficiency and, in particular, become an agent in the development of harmonious labour relations.”<sup>51</sup> This concept confirmed the direction in which personnel management was moving as signalled at the 1971 convention under the Presidency of Val Mickelburgh and that practitioners would be measured by their contribution to bottom line results. It is a further indication that the professionalism of the emerging human resource practitioner was being measured by hard business results.

Some key issues emerged from the convention. One, practitioners were expected to play a leading role in profit generation. Two, they were expected to be an agent in organisational

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<sup>51</sup>. J Coetzee, “Convention outcome” People and Profits, 5, 4 (October 1977), p.5.

change. Three, industrial relations was now a critical function for practitioners. Four, the nature of what it meant to be a professional in South Africa had become clearer. However, despite much talk about professionalism, no clear definition emerged as to what ‘professionalism’ meant.

An Editorial after the Convention entitled, “Time for Personnel Management to Come of Age”, stated that the demands on the practitioner would increase and the need for greater competence on their part was evident. The editorial urged personnel practitioners to be equal to the task at hand, reminding them that,

Having come of age as an institute it is time for Personnel Management to come of age as a profession. Only the professional practitioner will be able to effectively transform the present into an acceptable and workable future.<sup>52</sup>

This comment suggests that IPM members were conscious of the need to establish their maturity as a profession and display their professionalism in practice. The process of professionalisation was ongoing and called for further application to ensure the desired professional recognition of personnel practice.

The convention achieved two other break-throughs. Four out of nineteen speakers were black, namely, Martin Masipa, Dr A Moloi, Wells Ntuli, and Selby Baqwa.<sup>53</sup> The structure of the convention changed from being a solely auditorium based set of presentations, to the introduction of breakaway sessions. Multi-media methods were used for the first time to improve communication and atmosphere, following the model of

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<sup>52</sup>. Editorial, “Time for Personnel Management to Come of Age as a Profession.” People and Profits, 5, 4(October 1977), p 3.

<sup>53</sup> Convention brochure. See Appendix 4.3.

American HRM conventions.<sup>54</sup> Convention organisation had been modernised and projected a 'professional' image.

Part of the international pressure placed on the apartheid state in the 1970s came in the form of Codes of Practice, which required business and industry to comply with non-racial employment practices and were a pragmatic answer to the withdrawal of business from South Africa. They provided a compromise to avoid job losses and were designed to enforce de-racialisation in the work place by evolutionary change. Three articles in *People and Profits* in 1978 discussed aspects of the six separate codes<sup>55</sup>. The codes contained variations on eight measuring factors as they applied to black employees, viz Segregation, Employment Practices, Remuneration, Training, Development, Social Responsibility, Trade Unions and Migratory Labour. These codes were introduced at different times between 1974 and 1978 and were, the British Companies Code, the Sullivan Code (USA), the European Economic Community (EEC) Code of Ethics, Cape Chamber of Commerce, South African Council of Churches and the Urban Foundation/ South African Employers' Consultative Committee on Labour Affairs (SACCOLA) Code .

The British Companies Code, agreed upon in March 1974, was the first to have an effect in South Africa. Where companies agreed to implement the Code, they were required each year to submit a report indicating to what extent they had complied with the requirements. An illustration of one of the earliest outcomes of complying with a code was Smith and Nephew, agreeing to recognise a black union and signing the first agreement to

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<sup>54</sup> John Dickerson, the Chairman of the Convention Organising Committee, interview with researcher, 26/8/2003. The University of Witwatersrand TV Communication Unit, which had the most up-to-date equipment in S A at the time, was engaged to provide the multi-media service. The organisers believed that the Convention had set a new pattern in SA in conference presenting.

<sup>55</sup> No authors given, "Labour Codes", *People and Profits*, 5, 9 (March 1978), pp.26 - 29; "The EEC Code of Conduct", *People and Profits*, 5, 12 (June 1978), pp.32-33; "The SA Code of Employment Practice", *People and Profits*, 6, 5 (November 1978), pp.28-30.



this effect in South Africa.<sup>56</sup> The EEC Code released in July 1977 stressed African union rights, urged employers to combat migrant labour and implement wages at the minimum effective level. For some employers this was going too far and refused to comply with reporting to their governments.<sup>57</sup>

The Sullivan Code of Practice originating from the United States of America was designed by Leon Sullivan, an African-American member of the Board of General Motors in Detroit, and introduced into South Africa in 1976. The Sullivan Code was based on Six Principles which signatories were required to abide by and annually to report on their progress in implementation. For example, the first principle related to non-segregation of the races in all eating, toilet, change room and work facilities, which included removal of all race designation signs. The third, referred to “equal pay for all employees doing equal work for the same period of time.” This usually involved companies installing and maintaining unified wage and salary structures for its various operations along a continuous job evaluation ladder from unskilled worker to general manager. The fifth, involved “increasing the number of black and other non-whites in management and supervisory positions”. By July 1978 a total of 103 companies had subscribed to the Sullivan principles and complied with the requirements to a greater or lesser extent.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> The British owned Smith and Nephew textile plant at Pinetown complied with their overseas Head Office requirement to recognise the black union recruiting in their plant, the NUTW. In July 1974, they became the first company in South Africa to sign a formal recognition agreement with a South African black trade union, the National Union of Textile Workers (NUTW), which gave them bargaining rights in terms of a private agreement outside the existing labour legislation. See Steven Friedman, . Building Tomorrow Today. (Johannesburg, Ravan.1987). p.94 - 95, 108 - 109, 140. For first and last pages of S and N agreement: see Appendix 4.2. Copy obtained from Smith and Nephew and in researcher's own files.

<sup>57</sup> Friedman, 1987, pp.123 -126 & 140 -143. Friedman provides illustrations of the codes, their implementation and trade union reactions.

<sup>58</sup> J Piron, “The Sullivan Code” SA Journal of Labour Relations, 3, 1 (March 1979), pp 35-39.

The application of the codes was an evolutionary process and many companies had to use numerous techniques to implement de-racialisation, from training to subterfuges, such as allowing a few strategically placed pot plants in canteens in places where walls had been broken down and which were later quietly removed. Job evaluation was also implemented as an essential tool in the process of the equalisation of wages. Some leading protagonists at the time foresaw that if the codes were comprehensively implemented, it could lead to a position where it would be “a short step to political rights for blacks” as the work situation would have been equalised, which could lead to a greater normalisation in South Africa.<sup>59</sup> It was the personnel manager’s task to initiate changes and report on progress in terms of whatever Code their company had agreed to comply with. This function placed personnel managers in a unique position to lead the de-racialising of their organisations. Commitment to this leadership role, supported by the Board and company management, was a specifically South African feature of their emerging professionalism. It gave personnel managers the means to create an environment within an organisation, more conducive to better employment practices and thereby to improve workplace relations. That function may be interpreted as an essential part of fulfilling a professional role in a uniquely South African context.

Some of the broad spectrum of issues which personnel managers addressed towards the end of the 1970s may be assessed from the monthly theme in *People and Profits* during 1978. Articles focused on, Industrial Relations, Unemployment, Black Advancement, Women in Business, Evaluating Training, Closing the Wage Gap (between black and white) and so on. All these areas called for attention from personnel managers whose function it was to plan action to achieve realistic and manageable objectives. For example, Black advancement required careful obtaining of support, often from reluctant white managers, to have them accept for training and mentoring potential black technicians and

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<sup>59</sup> Piron, *S A Journal*, p 35.

skilled operators, where there would be strong opposition from the existing body of white artisans or high skilled white operators. The problems became more sensitive and threatening, when young black graduates who were potential future management material were introduced into the mix. But this was the environment in which personnel practitioners were called upon to play a professional role.

### **Developments in Personnel Education and Training**

The increased demands on business and industry brought about by the growing labour unrest, more liberal but still restrictive labour legislation, shortages of skilled and high level staff, compounded by deteriorating race relations, called for more competent and adequately trained personnel practitioners. In the early 1970s few personnel practitioners were equipped with the skills needed for the new challenges and training became a priority. Training of personnel practitioners had to include a range of needs and backgrounds. For example, these included ex-Township Superintendents who had been employed in personnel departments due to “their knowledge of the bantu”, ex- social workers “who knew how to work with people”, ex- British South African (BSA) police officers who worked with black people in the Rhodesias, young graduates with no experience, and personnel managers who operated in the 1960s outside the new industrial relations era.<sup>60</sup>

In April 1974 the Education Division of the IPM conducted a survey of training facilities for personnel management at local universities.<sup>61</sup> Responses were received from the

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<sup>60</sup> Tommy Vogel, interview with researcher, 8/11/1998. Vogel commenced work as a graduate personnel assistant at Unilever in 1956. Later became HR Director, Hulett's Sugar. and HR Director, SA Sugar Association.

<sup>61</sup> V R M Bebb, “The Development and Evaluation of an Open Learning Correspondence for the Personnel Profession and Personnel Management.” Unpublished PhD diss., Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand, 1978, pp.50 - 55.

universities of Cape Town (UCT), Fort Hare (UFH), South Africa (UNISA), Witwatersrand (WITS), Port Elizabeth (UPE), Pretoria (UP), Natal (NU), Rhodes (RU), Orange Free State (UOFS) and Stellenbosch (US). The study revealed a shift from pure science majors towards the applied sciences, eg., from Psychology to Industrial Psychology, Sociology to Industrial Sociology, Economics to Business Economics. Some of the Universities had introduced more practical courses, such as, Communication and Management Accounting, supporting the movement towards a more dynamic job competency model. The University of Pretoria had introduced a Bachelor of Commerce and a Bachelor of Administration in Personnel Management, thereby catering for personnel practitioners in the Public Service. Some of the Universities required practical work to accompany the academic training. The University of Fort Hare in 1970 introduced an innovative a two week residential course in Personnel Management for black personnel officers. These courses, arranged by Professor Wolhuter Backer, required each student to bring a written case study to the course reflecting a work problem for practical analysis by the participants.<sup>62</sup>

Subsequently, other specialist IR programmes were introduced by tertiary institutions. The Graduate Business School at WITS in 1975 launched an innovative one year post-graduate Higher Diploma in Personnel Management, which included with the normal personnel courses, broader management knowledge, such as, Elements of Management Accounting, Financial Management, Marketing and Statistics.<sup>63</sup> UNISA introduced a

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<sup>62</sup> These cases were later written up and published in book form. Backer, W., African Case Studies: Management Development (Johannesburg, McGraw-Hill, 1976). Also, interview with Backer by researcher, 26/8/2003.

<sup>63</sup> Simon Biesheuvel, "Professional Training of Personnel Managers: It's current urgency." People and Profits, 4, 5 (November 1976), pp.10-11,33. Biesheuvel identified the current training problem of personnel practitioners by explaining that graduates of the behavioural sciences lacked the application to the business environment. "In order to establish Personnel Management on a professional basis, training in line with that of teachers, medical practitioners...accountants, is required..... The diploma is intended to raise the practice of Personnel Management to a truly professional level...." p.11.

Masters Degree in Business Leadership (MBL) in Personnel Management in 1975. The UOFS in 1976 under the guidance of Prof H P Langenhoven, the doyen of academic personnel research in South Africa, introduced a bachelor's degree in Personnel Leadership (BPL) which, by selection of subjects, allowed specialisation in Industry, the Public Service or black personnel management. By 1976, UCT was providing specialist courses in Personnel Management within their four year B.Bus Sc degree. Various Technikons also provided Diploma courses. All the white institutions were restricted to training only whites.

Private consultants had also identified a marketable need for the training of black personnel officers. In 1975, Vocational and Personnel Services, based in Port Elizabeth and run by Des Froneman offered a Three Phase-Three Day programme led by Grey Mbau, an experienced black personnel practitioner. The course provided practical training in the basics of personnel management. Such courses were rudimentary and stop-gap by nature for those who had entered the field of personnel management with little or no background training. Damelin Management School in Johannesburg in 1978 introduced a part-time four month Diploma in Personnel Management, using prominent personnel practitioners as lecturers, such as Dave Hanson, Bobby Godsell and Sam van Coller. Rapid Results College, a private correspondence college was able to enroll all races for their diplomas in Personnel and Industrial Relations. The Institute of Industrial Relations, a business funded specialist industrial relations centre, began offering diplomas in industrial relations towards the end of the 1970s.

The IPM Diploma, the pedagogical structure of which had been developed in the early 1970s (see Chapter Three, (pp.101-105), was notable for being compiled and administered by a non-educational institution and was not government subsidised. By the end of 1976 the first five IPM students had completed the 3 year part-time programme and graduated in



January 1977 with the IPM Diploma in Personnel Management.<sup>64</sup>

Research carried out by UOFS in 1971, 1975 and 1980 to track the training of personnel practitioners revealed a steady increase in the numbers of students, the percentage increase of personnel practitioners in relation to other staff positions and the nature of the subjects studied.<sup>65</sup> The research showed that, for example, the number who possessed a Std 10 qualification had dropped over the period and those with a post-graduate qualification had increased. This may be interpreted as a response to the need for more adequately qualified practitioners and a sign that a process of greater professionalisation was taking place.

### **First Attempt at Obtaining Statutory Recognition**

R V 'Dick' Sutton, whilst IPM President in 1966, had called for the necessary conditions to be put in place to enable personnel management to move towards professional status. But it was not until 1973 that the issue of professional recognition was raised by the IPM Council for the first time. Professionalisation was perceived as part of the answer to the challenge of unfolding events in South Africa. It was foreseen that greater emphasis would need to be placed on training and industrial relations. The 3 year Diploma was an important

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<sup>64</sup> Sunday Times, "First IPM students get their reward", 30/1/77. The report stated that 1560 students were currently registered, either for the Introductory or Advanced Diploma, a remarkable growth over 5 years from the 12 who initially commenced the programme. The researcher was among these five.

<sup>65</sup> H P Langenhoven, Opleiding in Personeelbestuur: Huidige Stand en Behoeftes in SA. Afdeling Personeelnavorsing van die UOVS, 1971. H P Langenhoven, Opleiding in Personeelbestuur: Huidige Stand en Behoeftes in SA. Afdeling Personeelnavorsing van die UOVS, 1975. See also, "Opleiding in Personeelbestuur" report in People and Profits, 4, 5 (November 1976), pp.5-9,33. H P Langenhoven and H F Daniels, Investigation on the Professionalisation of Expert Personnel Management. Department of Industrial Psychology, Personnel Research Division, UOFS. P/55. December 1980.



contribution to the process.<sup>66</sup>

Much of the academic background to personnel management arose partly from research in psychology and industrial psychology in the universities, who taught personnel management subjects within their departments and who felt they had a strong claim over personnel management. With the promulgation of the Medical and Supplementary Health Services Professions Act No 56, 1974, and the subsequent establishment of a Professional Board of Psychology, Industrial Psychology became vested with legally enforceable exclusivity. When the regulations were promulgated it was discovered that “personnel psychology” and “personnel selection” were included within the definition of Industrial Psychology.<sup>67</sup> Such inclusion impinged on the independence that personnel management was seeking for itself. An appeal by the IPM against this inclusion resulted ultimately, in a blanket exemption for personnel.<sup>68</sup> Personnel management did not have a similar legally enforceable status as did the psychologists. Whyte believed that statutory recognition for personnel practitioners was desirable and achievable, but it would not be able to claim exclusivity (like a ‘closed shop’), because it may create potential conflict with other interested groups.<sup>69</sup>

In 1976 the IPM Council decided to follow the “registration path” of professionalisation of personnel practice and gave approval for an informal approach to be made to the Minister of Labour to sound out Government response to the concept of statutory recognition for personnel practitioners. In 1977 an “Ad Hoc Committee on Professional Recognition for

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<sup>66</sup> See relevant sections under sub-heading “Personnel Education and Training.”

<sup>67</sup> Government Gazette No R1530, 8/8/1975.

<sup>68</sup> Government Gazette No 5877, page 7, 3/2/1978.

<sup>69</sup> Gary Whyte, “Ad Hoc Committee on Professional Recognition of Personnel Practitioners.” Interview with People and Profits, 9,1 (July 1981), pp.27-31.

Personnel Practitioners ” was created and headed Gary Whyte, then President of the IPM (1976-1978), to progress the IPM’s commitment. Initial steps were taken to establish a professional register for practitioners. It appeared at first that the Minister was not opposed to the proposal.<sup>70</sup> Contact between the Department of Labour and the Ad Hoc Committee continued sporadically over the next few years and included the submission of a draft Bill for the Minister’s consideration.

The debate over the requirements to achieve professional status and how to define “professionalism” in personnel management continued as illustrated in the July 1978 edition of *People and Profits*, which contained five articles attempting to clarify the meaning of professionalism.<sup>71</sup> The Editorial, entitled “An Occupation in Conflict”, summarised the uncertain stage the debate had reached in establishing the criteria for defining personnel management as a profession. Langenhoven in “Professionalism of Personnel Management”, sought to provide a definition of a profession and then to clarify “whether professionalism is necessary.” He explained how professionalism could be achieved, stating that no limitation could be placed on the application of personnel management by unqualified persons. Personnel management was practiced by line managers who were not personnel specialists. He argued that it was the “specialist personnel services to management which needed to be professionalised and improved.” The way ahead called for the proper qualifying and registering of personnel practitioners who then would be known and recognised as such

Whyte had led the public debate in distinguishing between personnel management and industrial psychology, insisting that they were not the same and that personnel

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<sup>70</sup> Whyte, interview, “Ad Hoc Committee ....”, pp.27 -31.

<sup>71</sup> H P Langenhoven, “The Professionalism of Personnel Management.” *People and Profits* 5, 12 ( June 1978), p.14-15.

management had become an independent discipline.<sup>72</sup> The distinction was important. Although personnel management received academic guidance from the social sciences, it had emerged as an independent field of study and practice. He outlined the critical issues involving the process of professionalisation and the model that was being proposed.

Whyte had a vision of personnel management obtaining statutory recognition in its own right, not as a sub-division of psychology. Rather personnel management reflected the general application of social science to people at work and, within that concept, industrial psychology held its own discipline status available to personnel management, not the other way around. For personnel management part of the process of professionalisation meant obtaining statutory identity and recognition in its own right and not within the domain of some other recognised discipline. This struggle for independence fits with Wilensky's stage where an emerging discipline has to hold out against others who would endeavour to retain it within their own fold as it may lose membership and control of a cherished area of activity.<sup>73</sup>

Early in 1978, the Minister, who had favourably entertained the IPM application for statutory recognition, now appeared to have serious reservations over recognising personnel management. His department, reportedly had polled numerous interested organisations and individuals which led the Minister to claim that there was no majority support. This response took the IPM Ad Hoc Committee by surprise, as they had reason to believe that the ministerial answer did not offer a true reflection of the poll. No written evidence could be found which may have provided an explanation, nor could any person be located who could offer a reason for the rejection. The IPM decided that the Ad Hoc Committee should continue with its work despite the set back. In March 1979 a letter was

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<sup>72</sup> Gary Whyte, "Industrial Psychology...", p.9-13.

<sup>73</sup> Wilensky, "Professionalisation...", pp.137-158.

received from the Minister officially turning down the application on the grounds that the proposed legislation was unacceptable to the majority of respondents. He recommended that the IPM have further consultations with employer organisations and personnel practitioners to consider non-statutory ways in which personnel practitioners may promote their profession. He further suggested that they approach the Professional Board of Psychologists with the view to exploring the possibility of establishing a special registration category for personnel practitioners. Whyte believed that “there must have been some fairly powerful interests that were against the idea of professional recognition.” However, the IPM Council continued to work on developing the concept of statutory recognition.<sup>74</sup> There was a suspicion in certain IPM circles that concern existed in government circles that the IPM had ‘pink’ tendencies and held antagonistic attitudes to government policies which meant it was unlikely to be granted additional status, despite the fact that some IPM members had sound contacts within government circles.<sup>75</sup>

In February 1980, Marais Viljoen, then the Minister of Manpower, was approached to reopen discussions on statutory recognition. R V Sutton, President of the IPM (1980-1981) and Whyte met with the Minister. Sutton recalled that the Minister bluntly told them “You will never be recognised by this department because you recognise kaffirs.” Sutton there upon responded saying, “So be it, we are not changing” and walked out of the meeting.<sup>76</sup>

A letter from the Minister Viljoen in April 1980 informed the Ad Hoc Committee that his

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<sup>74</sup> Whyte, “Ad Hoc Committee....”, p.28.

<sup>75</sup> Dawid Swart, interview with researcher, 26/8/2003. He was Vice President of the IPM 1994-5 and Acting Executive Director.

<sup>76</sup> Sutton, interview with researcher, 13/9/98.

department would not reopen the matter of recognition.<sup>77</sup> Two elements emerge at this stage. One, the Minister claimed a majority of those polled were opposed, which the Ad Hoc Committee knew to be inaccurate from discussions with leading employer bodies.<sup>78</sup> Two, the underlying issue appeared to be a racially defined decision based on Government policy, which wanted professional associations to be racially demarcated. These discussions took place against a background where the Psychological Association of South Africa (PASA) had split in the early 1960s on the issue of separate race based membership and led to the creation of an all white body, the Siekundige Instituut van Suid Afrika (SIRSA). The new association readily obtained professional registration within the Medical and Dental Council Act. The IPM in the early years of the 1970s had been trying to establish a separate black IPM and had ultimately backed off in favour of an integrated association. (See section: Independent Black PMA in next section in this chapter).

Within a year of government departmental rejection of the concept of statutory recognition, the Council of the IPM acted to create their own independent non-statutory body. A draft Charter and Regulations was submitted to IPM members for response.<sup>79</sup> Of a 48% response, 92% supported the concept and the proposed charter. This overwhelmingly positive response signalled the direction in which the IPM moved. The support was even stronger than that obtained in an academic study undertaken on the issue of professionalisation published in 1980.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> This important letter could not be located in the files of the SABPP. It is referred to by Whyte in an interview with *People and Profits*, 9, 1 (July 1981), p28. No relevant personal papers left by Whyte have been located following his death in 1991.

<sup>78</sup> Whyte, "Ad Hoc Committee..." p.28. Whyte claimed that "there must have been some fairly powerful interests that were anti the idea of professional recognition, to be able to persuade the minister to be quite so categorical."

<sup>79</sup> SABPP Draft Charter, "Ad Hoc Committee..." *People and Profits*, 9, 1 (July 1981), p.25.

<sup>80</sup> Langenhoven and Daniels, "Investigation on the Professionalisation ...." In response to the question: "The time is ripe for the professionalisation of personnel practice", 83.3% answered "yes".

This survey provided important research which the IPM's Ad Hoc Committee used in proceeding with the drafting of the Charter and Regulations for the launch of the South African Board of Personnel Practice. (SABPP)<sup>81</sup>. The inauguration of the SABPP took place in October 1981, with Gary Whyte as chairperson and Prof H F Langenhoven of the University of the Orange Free State, as deputy. Of the 17 board members, two were female and four black.<sup>82</sup> Wilhelm Crous, the IPM Executive Director, became the first registrar. The registration of practitioners commenced in 1983. By the end of the year nearly 1000 practitioners had been accepted and registered.

As soon as the the SABPP had become fully operational, Whyte wrote to the Director General of Department of Manpower in December 1983, following earlier contact, outlining the history of previous attempts by the IPM to obtain professional registration. The letter explained that circumstances had changed significantly in South Africa, which made a new submission for registration appropriate.<sup>83</sup> But no outcome materialised from that initiative during the period under investigation.

### **The Independent Black Personnel Management Association**

The recruitment of BPPs increased steadily throughout the 1970s. Outside of sales, personnel became a promising career option for black graduates. But it was still an

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<sup>81</sup> The response to some of the other questions in the IPM survey are of interest, as they focussed on essential issues being debated among practitioners at the time. Only 30% felt the controlling Board should fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Manpower Utilisation. (previously the Department of Labour), with 33% uncertain, and 32% against. A high 71% felt that personnel practitioners should register under an Act other than that under which psychologists were registered. A majority of 67% believed that unregistered practitioners could not be forbidden from practising.

<sup>82</sup> These members were, Wells Ntuli, David Lamola, Cyril Jantjes, Dr Bulumko Msengana, Ms Denese Jordan and Ms Judy Townsend.

<sup>83</sup> Gary Whyte letter to Die Direkteur Generaal, Departement Mannekrag, 7 December 1983: .SABPP Files



apartheid society and opportunity for career development had not removed prejudice within organisations, although a growing number of companies made efforts to reduce the apartheid culture, especially in companies applying Codes of Conduct/Practice. The sense of resentment among many BPPs continued, believing that they were still subject to discrimination in their jobs. (See pages 138-139) It was from the "class of 1976" that many new BPPs were recruited in the late 1970s and who came to their companies with the ideal of working to serve black workers in industry and to contribute ultimately to a more free, just and democratic South Africa.<sup>84</sup>

The number of BPPs appearing on IPM public platforms increased during the 1970s<sup>85</sup>. However, an analysis of *People and Profits* articles from 1973 to 1979 reveals a limited number of articles by BPPs. The contributions published were constructive, urging the speed up of training for blacks, removal of job barriers and improving conditions for black workers to allow them to make a more meaningful contribution in the economy. By 1977 the IPM had begun to take the needs of BPP's more actively into account as witnessed by two topics at the Annual Convention that year addressed by black speakers.<sup>86</sup>

A group of BPP's rejection of the IPM noted in the founding of NEPTDASA continued during the 1970s.(see pp.107-108) Founded in 1970, NEPTDASA lost momentum and in October 1973 was re-constituted as the Personnel Management Association (PMA), with branches in Natal, Eastern Cape (East London and Port Elizabeth) and Witwatersrand.

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<sup>84</sup> Legg, "Sources of Stress", dealt with this dimension in relation to the issue of ambiguity in HRM and its potential as a source of stress among HRP's.

<sup>85</sup> This may be illustrated by the number of Black speakers at IPM Annual Convention: 1970 -0: 1974 - 2: 1977 - 4. See Appendix 3.5.

<sup>86</sup> Tom Mollette, "The developing Black manager- his most pressing needs and how to meet them." and Wells Ntuli. "The conflict of the Black personnel man in having to balance professional ethics with cultural and political pressures- what can management do to help?" See Quo Vadis convention brochure. See Appendix 4.3.

Wells Ntuli became National President and Felix Dlamini, the Natal Branch Chairman. The PMA had strong membership commitment in Natal, which provided some of its leadership who were committed to the concept of independence from the IPM.<sup>87</sup> To allow access to as many BPPs as possible the membership requirements were low. Some would not have qualified for full IPM membership, but it was argued that this low entry level was important to give opportunity for less academically qualified and less experienced persons to gain exposure to mentoring from more senior members. The Natal Branch Chairman's Annual Report for 1974, reflects activities similar to those of the IPM.<sup>88</sup> By 1975 the PMA appeared to have difficulties functioning effectively and became victim of active recruiting of black practitioners by the IPM.<sup>89</sup> In the same year the IPM approached the PMA to amalgamate and discussions followed between the two bodies. An understanding of the level of resentment among many BPPs may be gauged from biographical information from the experiences of a BPP.<sup>90</sup> These feelings were largely withheld from their white colleagues at the time.

During the early 1970s, the IPM had been endeavouring to create a separate institute for "Non-White" personnel staff. It is not clear why the IPM felt it was necessary to launch a separate black association but a plausible explanation is available. The more conservative IPM members wanted to follow the racial split made by psychologists and to be more in keeping with government policy of providing separate services for the different race groups. Social workers had racially separate bodies and the Psychological Association of South Africa (PASA) had suffered a white breakaway in the early 1960s of the Sielkundige

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<sup>87</sup> PMA, minutes of the AGM Durban Branch, 9/2/1974.

<sup>88</sup> PMA, Chairman's Annual Report, AGM, Natal Branch, 25/1/1975.

<sup>89</sup> PMA, memorandum from Chairman Natal Branch to the National President. Undated.

<sup>90</sup> Sipho Masondo, "Experiences of a BPP". Interview by researcher, 23/4/1998 and 28/8/2003. See Appendix 4.4.

Instituut van die Republiek van Suid Afrika (SIRSA), which quickly obtained statutory status to practice (see p.92). Despite “seed” money having been allocated by the IPM to fund a new black association, the endeavour “had not worked well.”<sup>91</sup> The IPM constitution, although entirely non-racial appears to have been applied in a manner that excluded black practitioners from full membership. A decision was made to amend the constitution to specifically allow for membership by all race groups. The National Director wrote to all members asking them to vote to amend the constitution to specifically include persons of all races. This would allow the IPM to openly recruit all race groups. The postal vote was in favour of the amendment and shortly after at a general meeting in October 1974 the amendment was unanimously approved.<sup>92</sup>

The IPM then invited the PMA to join them in discussions to amalgamate the two organisations.<sup>93</sup> The PMA had numerous reservations over unification, for example, the higher membership qualifications which would exclude PMA members and the need to have black representation on IPM committees. They held a suspicion that the IPM needed to project itself as a multi-racial body to enable it to retain and obtain membership of international personnel organisations. The negotiations broke down as the IPM, although agreeing to most of the PMA proposals, was not prepared to meet all their demands, such as compromise on qualifications. In 1977, Wells Ntuli, an executive member of the PMA accepted a portfolio in the IPM, which was followed by some other leading PMA members joining the IPM, resulting in the dissolution of the PMA in the Transvaal.<sup>94</sup> The PMA

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<sup>91</sup> Dave Jackson, IPM National Director, letter to all IPM members, 16/9/1974. IPM files.

<sup>92</sup> IPM, minutes of a Special General Meeting, 17/10/74.

<sup>93</sup> Minutes of combined meeting of IPM and PMA, Carlton Hotel, 8-9/3/1975.

<sup>94</sup> Ntuli, Acting National Director and President of the PMA, letter informing members that all the branches of the PMA had agreed to an amalgamation with the IPM, 30/11/77. He urged members to submit IPM membership applications. See also, Nzimande's report and interpretation of these negotiations, p.238, 1991. Also, interview by researcher with J B Magwaza, 1998.

continued with its activities, despite the active recruitment of BPPs by the IPM.<sup>95</sup> Their decision to continue included an announcement that the PMA was open to all races.

Despite the decline of the PMA, there were strong leaders who believed in the need for a black personnel practitioner forum. In September 1981, a group of thirty from the Transvaal, East London, Port Elizabeth and Durban met at the Athlone Hotel in Durban to discuss the formation of a new body, representative of black personnel practitioners. A report on the meeting reveals different perceptions of the way forward.<sup>96</sup> Among the views was the need to create a unified black approach which would strengthen future negotiation with the IPM from a position of greater strength. In May 1983, under the convenorship of Obed Mlaba, a contact group, that had met on previous occasions, agreed that there was a need for a professional body to promote the interests of black personnel and training practitioners which would also deal with social and political issues.<sup>97</sup>

Meanwhile, the establishment of the Black Management Forum (BMF) had taken place in 1976 to assist in the development and advancement of blacks in the business world and the broader South African community. The formation of the BMF added support to the PMA concept of independent black organisations catering specifically for black interests.<sup>98</sup> The

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<sup>95</sup> Re-organisation of the PMA. Memo from the Natal Branch Chairman to National President following meeting of the Natal Branch, 57/1975. Also, letter from IPM President to PMA President: 29/1/1976. The announcement in the form of a press release in September 1975 read, "Black Personnel Management Body goes Non-racial."

<sup>96</sup> Report on the Proceedings of a Meeting of the Black Personnel Practitioners Delegation: Athlone Hotel, Durban 19/9/1981 Report undated.

<sup>97</sup> Report of the Personnel Contact Group Sub-Committee, 21/5/1983. Report undated.

<sup>98</sup> The original Mission Statement of the BMF read: "The Black Management Forum is to assist and encourage the development and advancement of members of the Black Community to ensure greater involvement and participation in the provision of effective leadership in business and the broader South African community." See Appendix 4.5.

founding of the BMF expressed the belief in the need for black forums to promote the aspirations of the increasing number of black persons moving into managerial careers. A substantial number of BPPs were members of the BMF and a close alliance existed between the PMA and the BMF, as both organisations were striving for similar goals. The BPPs played an important role in the BMF as they were often in the more senior company jobs.<sup>99</sup> In Natal there was tension between the two organisations as the PMA believed the BMF was too close to white business and too dependent on corporate funding to follow strongly independent lines in the interests of black development. Despite differences, the two bodies played a supportive role towards each other.

The establishment of the SA Board for Personnel Practice (SABPP) by the IPM in 1981, brought a new dilemma for BPPs who desired professional status. To obtain professional registration they would need to submit to the SABPP conditions on terms that may be prejudicial to many of them, due to lack of the necessary formal educational qualifications.

### **Concluding Comments on the Period 1973 -1983**

The drive to professionalise personnel management intensified in this period 1973-1983. Important observations arise from the events that took place and which influenced the process of professionalising the personnel function. The government's separate development policy began moving into rearguard action as they made concessions under pressure from the re-vitalised black trade unions, growing international pressure and economic realities of the impossibility of maintaining their apartheid system.

At the commencement of this period personnel management had been mostly a junior

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<sup>99</sup> These factors are substantiated in interviews by researcher with Magwaza, 1998 and Masondo, 2003, active members of both the PMA and the BMF.

partner in company management, applying its traditional role of personnel administration, ie., selection, recruitment, training, payroll administration and welfare services, and the like.

With the Durban strikes a new industrial relations era commenced, bringing with it major adjustments by personnel managers as they grappled to lead their organisations through largely uncharted labour relations waters. The outcome of the Wiehahn commission only intensified the demands on practitioners who now had the added responsibility of interpreting new labour law for line managers, often set in traditional management styles. At the same time, personnel managers began introducing a whole new range of management development concepts to upgrade the level of South African management skills which practitioners to lead their organisations into much more sophisticated methods of organisational leadership. These innovations began placing personnel management in a more 'professional' mode of contribution to their organisations.

As part of the process of upgrading to achieve a more professional level of training and education the tertiary institutions began to provide more specialised training in personnel management to equip students for a far more demanding personnel environment. Their enhanced contribution was designed for both new comers and the upgrading of existing practitioners and signalled the commencement of in-depth 'professional' education. The IPM diploma became part of this process.

The implications of the entrenched apartheid society with its race separation and prejudice took its toll in the experience of BPPs, an issue not properly appreciated by many of their white colleagues at the time with the launching of the PMA. The IPM membership was representative of a broad spectrum of views and was often influenced in its decisions by the more conservative elements who supported government policies on race separation. The IPM did not see its role as a lobby to pressurise government to remove its race legislation,



although many personnel managers took the opportunity to remove symbols of race through the application of the Codes of Practice. The breakaway by a group of BPPs from the IPM was symptomatic of the problem. Although numerically relative small in number, the establishment of the PMA was a sign that there were serious unresolved issues at stake. These issues were not resolved during this period.

The predominating race issue left an unanswered question concerning professionalism. In the striving for professional status, what should be the role of the personnel practitioner in matters of racial prejudice in the work place? Could a person be a professional without dealing actively with race issues? The question was not openly debated in the period discussed in this chapter and hence the IPM was not able to provide a lead for its members.

The IPM made a strong case for statutory recognition, but was rebuffed by the Government, either on grounds that appeared to be based on the IPMs failure to fall into line with government policy or because the IPM was displaying a desire to establish itself as a “profession” in its own right. No clear answers emerged to the continued rejection by government of statutory rejection.

Towards the end of the period under analysis a greater confidence is observed among personnel practitioners in their handling of their function. An Editorial in *People and Profits* referred to the ‘revolution’ through which personnel management had progressed and there a perception emerges that they had “come of age” and appeared as “professionals”<sup>100</sup>. But no clear common definition of ‘professional’ had been arrived at against which practitioners could be assessed as ‘professional’.

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<sup>100</sup> Editorial, “Revolution” *People and Profits*, 9, 4 (October 1981). “Personnel, we believe, has come of age. And that makes the revolution we are talking about all the more exciting. Because now we have the chance to prove that we can handle the industrial relations challenges and the communication challenges that are facing us - as personnel professionals.”

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **THE PROCESS OF PROFESSIONALISATION IN A PERIOD OF TRANSITION: 1984 - 1995**

National events during 1984-1995 brought about a period of transition in South Africa that led to a new society and in the process influenced the professionalisation of human resource management. Due to the number and significance of events that built up rapidly during this time, the background discussion in this chapter is covered in more detail. The chapter investigates the responses of the SABPP, the IPM and developments in HRM in general as they adapted to the demands of the emerging 'new' South Africa. By the mid 1980s, personnel management had evolved into human resource management and the term 'human resource management' (HRM) had become commonly used in place of 'personnel management'. In keeping with the trend, HRM is used from now on in this study, other than where 'personnel management' would assist in clarity.

#### **Background to the Period**

This volatile period commences with increasingly organised unrest in the country and culminates in South Africa's transition to its first elected democratic government. It was a period of mass mobilisation of township dwellers and union militancy. The United Democratic Front (UDF), formed in 1983 as a co-ordinating front, provided a focus for the developing protests against the apartheid state. Numerous anti-government activities gathered momentum, such as, the growing number of students boycotting classes, rent and consumer boycotts. For example, a consumer boycott led by a trade union was launched against Simba Quix following the dismissal of 450 members. FOSATU unions in the Transvaal organised a regional stayaway for two days in November 1984 with a reported absenteeism of around 800 000 workers. There was a high level of union activity centred on

tactical campaigns to achieve set targets, for example, May Day as a public holiday and the Living Wage Campaign<sup>1</sup>. Political and community organisations, together with trade unions began campaigning against the 1984 elections for the new tricameral, racially-based parliament, which was to be launched later that year.<sup>2</sup>

In 1985 the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) was launched, representing 33 trade unions and a reported 460 000 members. Elijah Barayi, the first President, significantly was a personnel assistant at the Blyvooruitzicht Mine of Rand Mines. These new black unions provided a large part of the internal pressure on business and industry that helped contribute to the final demise of the National Party government.

From 1986 the number of strikes continued to increase. Within three months 550 000 mandays had been lost, more than the 450 000 lost mandays for the whole of the 1984.<sup>3</sup> Strike statistics during the period reveal a steady increase in mandays lost.<sup>4</sup> By 1992 the mandays lost had increased to 4.5 million. HRPs involved in the forefront of negotiations in this period believe that the situation would have been considerably worse but for the skill of company negotiators. Dickerson, a senior training consultant, who was involved in numerous skills training programmes in the 1970s and 1980s, believed that skilful HRPs,

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<sup>1</sup> This was a strategy campaign launched by COSATU in 1987 and focussed initially on minimum wages as a militant rallying call. It was extended each year with new campaign issues added, such as other minimum benefits, like annual leave, and later included a demand for national bargaining forums. Mark Anstey, "The Living Wage Debate", *IPM Journal*, 6, 5 (October 1987), pp 12-16. Jane Barrett, "The Living Wage Campaign", *IPM Journal*, 8, 2 (September 1989), pp.8-12. Rene Roux, "Reviving the Living Wage Campaign", *SA Labour Bulletin*, 4, 7 (March 1990), pp.14-23.

<sup>2</sup> William Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p.255.

<sup>3</sup> *The Star*, 20 April 1986.

<sup>4</sup> The Andrew Levy and Associates, *Annual Report on Labour Relations in South Africa: 1992-1993*, provides a graph of the number of mandays lost 1979 - 1992, which shows the sharp increase in strikes from 1983. p.20. See Appendix 5.1. A scale showing the percentage increase in wages 1986-1992 indicates the effect of strikes, over 50% of which were wage related, p.35. See Appendix 5.1.

both black and white, need to be acknowledged for the role they played in saving many a labour conflict from getting totally out of hand and worsening the violent situation in the country.<sup>5</sup> The high percentage level of wage settlements had a further impact on business as the cost of labour began to rise. By 1985 a growing number of prominent business leaders, academics, clergy and others had recognised that the apartheid state could not last and that ultimately blacks would gain substantial political power. A significant shift took place that year when a business delegation, led by Gavin Relly, Chairman of the Anglo-American Corporation, met the ANC in Lusaka. This meeting was one of the first of a number of similar trips undertaken in subsequent years by a range of opposition politicians, trade unionists and intellectuals who met the ANC outside the country to work out a format for radical change in the South to resolve the growing internal crisis.<sup>6</sup>

The government declared a general State of Emergency throughout the country in mid 1986 in an effort to contain the unrest and contain the growing ungovernability of the black townships where troops began patrolling the worst affected areas. In an attempt at pacification, state security agencies used killings of prominent persons which only led to increased revolts and funerals becoming political rallies. Trade unionists and others were arrested, detained and banned. By 1988 the government placed restrictions on the UDF In KwaZulu Natal the violence between the ANC supporters and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), cost many lives and this unrest spread to the hostels and townships on the Reef. The outcome of the repression created two fronts on which the government had to fight. The first, at home against the growing militancy of the unions and the uncontrollable townships, and the second, the war beyond the borders of South Africa involving South African security forces in neighbouring countries.

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<sup>5</sup> Dickerson, interview with the researcher 26/8/2003.

<sup>6</sup> Beinart, *Twentieth Century*, pp. 260-261; Thompson, *History of South Africa*, 241.

In 1989, President P. W Botha suffered a mild stroke and in the same year an election led to F W de Klerk taking over as President. Events followed swiftly. Important Robben Island prisoners were released. Early in 1990 the ANC, PAC and the SA Communist Party were unbanned. Mandela was released from prison and addressed a massive rally outside the Cape Town City Hall, which heralded the political changes to come. At the time of these important changes in South Africa, equally momentous developments took place in Europe with the collapse of communist rule in Eastern Europe and the fall of the Berlin Wall in late 1989, which aided the willingness to make concessions on the part of the South African government, which had been strongly anti-communist.

A chaotic period from 1990-1994 followed in South Africa, particularly on the Reef and in KwaZulu Natal, as contending parties sought to gain advantage to back up their role in the negotiations to establish a new constitution and related democracy. During this unsettled period the government steadily dismantled apartheid legislation, with the repeal in 1991 of the core of apartheid, the Population Registration Act, followed by the Group Areas Act and Native Land Acts. In total some sixty pieces of legislation were withdrawn. Protracted negotiations took place in the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) commencing from December 1991, but despite negotiations collapsing at one stage in 1992, sufficient appreciation of the dire consequences of failure forced the parties to return to negotiations. A new and advanced constitution was ultimately agreed to and South Africa's first democratic elections were held in April 1994. A total of 19,726,610 voted. For many the act of voting "was a liberating, a cathartic, almost religious, experience."<sup>7</sup> In May 1994, Nelson Mandela was sworn in as President and a new era commenced in the government of South Africa, led initially by a Government of National Unity including De Klerk as a Vice President.

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<sup>7</sup> R Ross, A Concise History of South Africa (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999), p.194.

The new government had the enormous task of unifying the country. President Mandela became a unifying force with his consistent policy of reconciliation and moderation. The establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) led to a bold attempt to expose and clear out a history of oppression, racial discrimination and violence to enable a process of 'rainbow' nation-building to commence. President Mandela symbolised his attempts at nation building by sharing the winners podium in a Springbok rugby jersey in 1995, when South Africa won the World Cup in Johannesburg. For many it became a unifying moment, but not for all because many still deeply resented the sufferings of the past, symbolised by a white dominated sport which had entrenched racial discrimination in past in its playing structures.

In keeping with its mandate, the ANC led government proceeded to enact far-reaching labour and employment legislation from 1995 onwards. This legislation placed HR managers in the forefront of applying new legislated labour requirements. The new Labour Relations Act (LRA) No 66 of 1995 illustrated an attempt at completely re-writing labour relations law and practice with the aim of achieving the objectives found in the new Constitution to "advance economic development, social justice, labour peace, and democratisation of the workplace." The South African Qualifications Authority Act (SAQA) (1995) came next as the first of a series dealing with a new dispensation in skills training, development and education. Two ANC policy objective documents compiled during the early 1990s provided direction on other critical areas requiring attention. The first, on matters of reconstruction and development <sup>8</sup>, with COSATU doing much of the ground work, and the second on education and training, included contributions by members of the IPM on issues related to human resource development.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> No author given, The Reconstruction and Development Programme. (Johannesburg: Umanyano Publications, 1994).

<sup>9</sup> No author given, A Policy Framework for Education and Training (Manzini Swaziland: MacMillan, 1995).



The events of 1984-1995 reverberated in the workplace in numerous ways. The “shopfloor” had now become an arena for the liberation struggle.<sup>10</sup> The terminology the unions brought to the workplace and the negotiating table, was often marxist/socialist and the agenda alarming to conservative managers. Managers began to hear, not just about workers rights, massively improved wages, but about ‘worker control of the means of production’. Management during this period learned, not only how to negotiate wages and terms and conditions of employment, but how to handle discipline and dismissals in a new way in keeping with new labour laws. The heightened political climate in the country, further required managers to be aware of the new sensitivities of an often, highly politicised workforce, who brought to the work place political demands. Human resource managers were called on to lead their companies through these sensitivities, often with white managers who had no wish to make any concessions on political issues. Managers who had worked overseas often expressed the view that there was no country in the world where managers and human resource managers were required to be as multi-skilled as in South Africa.

### **Trends in Human Resource Management in South Africa**

Labour matters had become almost inseparable from political struggles - despite the government’s exertions to reduce the involvement of black trade unions in forcing political change in South Africa. By the mid 1980s, companies began to have difficulty separating political from genuine labour issues in order to negotiate on matters that were within their jurisdiction. The Federated Chamber of Industries to assist management, towards the end of 1986, circulated to all its affiliates a document, “Managing in Political Uncertainty;

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<sup>10</sup> The term “shopfloor” in industrial relations signifies factory and other workers.

Operating Management Guidelines.”<sup>11</sup> It was sent to all member companies and thus had extremely wide distribution throughout South Africa. The document acknowledges that industrial relations practice can not be divorced from socio-political conflicts or political uncertainty in the wider society. ‘Political uncertainty’ was perceived as part of a process leading to a ‘post-apartheid society’. Its pro-active approach encouraged participative management methods and social responsibility as ways of allowing a healthier employment climate to emerge which could reduce some of the politicisation taking place on the shopfloor.

To illustrate the expansion of programmes to assist managers and businesses cope with the increased sensitivity of industrial relations problems, two examples are provided. The Natal Chamber of Industries, in the mid 1980s, established a special Industrial Relations division, which provided consultation advice and initiated a very popular two day annual seminar “The Changing Face of Industrial Relations”, which continued for nearly ten years.<sup>12</sup> Private consultants, especially those with labour law expertise, emerged in growing numbers to meet the calls for specialist assistance beyond the capabilities of line managers and inexperienced personnel managers. For example, Andrew Levy & Associates rapidly gained prominence arising from their ability to present practical up-to-date, focussed seminars on pressing industrial relations issues and relevant legal interpretations. Levy’s annual “The Outer Edge of Industrial Relations”, seminars which commenced in 1985, were conducted in the main centres of the country which continued

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<sup>11</sup> “Managing in Political Uncertainty: Operating Management Guidelines”. This document originated from the Anglo American Corp Industrial Relations Unit and is dated May 1986. Copy in researcher’s files.

<sup>12</sup> Three of the topics at the 1986 seminar indicate where help was most needed. Professor PAK le Roux spoke on “Do’s and Don’t’s in Strike Action”. Professor Louis Kampher dealt with “Handling Community issues in the Workplace: A Perspective” and Professor Mike Hough explained “Perceivable Patterns in Township Unrest: An Evaluation”. See *IR Focus*, 8,1 (31 July 1986). Quarterly Publication of the Natal Chamber of Industries: Supplement to the Weekly Bulletin No.30.

for over ten years.<sup>13</sup> Prof Duncan Innes, an academic from the University of Witwatersrand with union involvement experience, became another, among many, who provided a consulting service to management by interpreting union perceptions and advising on management action to deal with labour and union issues. The IPM ran its own seminars, workshops and breakfasts for its members, often pushing the frontiers of previous experience, by inviting some presenters who were seen as controversial. For example, the Natal Coastal Branch in Durban in the mid-1980s invited Alec Erwin, ex-academic and General Secretary of the National Union of Textile Workers, to address its members. In order to provide members the opportunity to keep up to date and in touch with what different companies were doing to handle the IR pressure, the branch organised monthly lunch time networking sessions where HR practitioners shared experiences on happenings in their own companies and how they were handling the industrial relations issues involved. Similar meetings occurred elsewhere in the country as a response to the demands being made on HRPs to provide solutions for their organisations. In this way the IPM maintained a practice begun in the mid 1940s by Isobel White which helped deepen the professionalism of practitioners through sound networking.

Whilst industrial relations absorbed the greater share of HRPs time, developments in general HRM moved ahead, with new and relevant techniques constantly being fed into organisations in South Africa. The IPM Annual Convention themes provide a guide to the 'flavour of the year' ideas propagated by consultants, academics and researchers. The 1984 Convention is illustrative of the trend. The theme: "Human Resource Management: In Search of Excellence" presented Tom Peters as guest and keynote speaker. Peters, internationally renowned, popularised a management style that stressed 'excellence' as the

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<sup>13</sup> These seminars continued annually into the mid-1990s and delegates were handed a volume of notes at the end of each seminar providing detailed reference material. Levy added an annual review of labour relations in South Africa, again with a well researched and a reliable set of researched notes, which included details of trade unions and interpretation of their activities.

essential focus of successful management.<sup>14</sup> In this way South African HRPs learnt first hand from leading international management thinkers. From an industrial relations perspective, the Peters approach was based on eliminating ‘us/them’ confrontational labour relations. This concept of mutuality was inimical to the unions whose strategy focussed on confrontational tactics to achieve their goals.

Japanese management had utilised Japanese culture to develop high levels of productivity and quality. Their methods, based on a philosophy of participative management and collective decision making were in contrast to the western individualistic culture. In an endeavour to improve productivity and quality, South African companies began applying Japanese management techniques. Toyota, outside Durban, in 1978 introduced Quality Circles and other Japanese techniques.<sup>15</sup> Although successes were achieved in using Japanese methods, South Africa could not re-create the Japanese cultural environment in a deeply divided society. The Armstrong model referred to in Chapter One identified two major influences on HRM in the 1980s, viz., the “excellence factor” and the “Japanese connection.”<sup>16</sup> These management techniques had been promoted and applied in numerous companies in South Africa with varying degrees of success, but productivity innovations were consistently apposed by unions as exploitation of the workers. The SA Labour Bulletin during this period regularly carried articles supporting and encouraging resistance to innovative techniques. The conflict was placed in stark contrast in 1987 over the issue of

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<sup>14</sup> Thomas J Peters and Robert H Waterman, In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best- Run Companies (New York: Warner Books, 1982). This is Peters' most oft quoted book.

<sup>15</sup> Theo van den Bergh, “The Toyota Experience”. Paper delivered at IPM Seminar in Durban 16/2/1990 outlining developments at Toyota whilst applying Japanese participative management techniques. A number of Toyota workers were present and participated in the discussions. Paper in researcher's private files. Van den Bergh was Toyota Group Director: Personnel and Industrial Relations. Toyota illustrates a thorough attempt at using Japanese techniques in a very large SA plant.

<sup>16</sup> M Armstrong, Personnel and the Bottom Line (Wimbledon, IPM, 1989). The Armstrong Model, see Appendix 1.1.

share options for workers, where the Financial Mail declared the issue to be one of Capitalism vs Socialism.<sup>17</sup>

The 1985 IPM Convention Theme of managing in a First World - Third World context . became a timely attempt to assist HRPs with the complications of applying western practices in a developing world.<sup>18</sup> Most HRM concepts arrived from advanced countries and required skill to implement in the South African context, especially where management was challenged on the political front as well. The convention had a total of 36 speakers, with six black males and five white females, reflecting an effort to hear from those who could bring new interpretations and insights into HRM applications. For the first time nearly a third of the presenters were other than white males and represented a new dimension to the professionalising process, which significantly related to translating the application of HRM into a developing world scenario.

The growing emphasis on a participative style of management is observable in this period as a number of companies achieved success to the stage where they became models for others to emulate. Debate and experimentation in participative management had commenced in the 1970s, but it was not until the 1980s that good case studies of reportable success became available. Cashbuild a building material supplier, emerged as a unique example of participative management.<sup>19</sup> Albert Koopman, the Managing Director, personally led the process of change. Taking over a business in financial trouble, in a time of growing labour unrest and increasing political tension, he succeeded in turning Cashbuild into a profitable

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<sup>17</sup> Financial Mail, "Capitalism vs Socialism", December 4 1987, p.51. The issues involved are discussed by Bashier Valli in A Social Contract - the way forward? (Johannesburg:Phambili Books, 1992).

<sup>18</sup> 1985 IPM Convention theme, "First World: Third World. The Implications."

<sup>19</sup> The story is told in A D Koopman, M E Nasser, and J Nel, The Corporate Crusaders. (Johannesburg: Lexicon Publishers, 1987).

company. Blending the philosophy of ‘excellence’ with Japanese management ideas, he moved to establish a principle of “devolution of power from the top and empowerment from the bottom.” Koopman showed that it was possible for participative management to succeed within the historical distrust inherent in a racially divided, politically dis-empowered South African context. Cashbuild in the late 1980s, became a positive role model for many personnel managers, who were able to refer their managers to Koopman’s achievements against the odds.<sup>20</sup>

P G Bison, a leading South African timber press board manufacturer, in 1989 set out to deal with the destructive confrontational relations between labour and management in their Reef plant. The introduction of a “value sharing” programme brought together all employees and managers in the company in discussions to open the way to improving relationships and productivity. The success of the programme led to a jointly agreed statement of “Company Values” and a programme of “continuous improvement under the title “Total Productivity and Quality”(TPQ). By 1991 the stage had been reached where a representative national forum had been established within the company to develop a new company strategy. The representatives included the Paper Pulp Wood & Allied Workers Union (PPWAWU, its shop stewards and a range of other groups and management who dealt with such sensitive issues as company restructuring and retrenchments.<sup>21</sup>

A similar programme was initiated by Lever Brothers, part of the multinational Unilever at both their large Maydon Wharf and Boksburg plants, but this time with two different unions. The Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU) (COSATU) at Maydon Wharf and

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<sup>20</sup> Albert Koopman, “Participative Management - The Key to Corporate Efficiency or Liberating the Work Ethic.” Copy of a paper delivered at the IPM Convention 1988. IPM files.

<sup>21</sup> G. Evans, “Worker Participation at P G Bison”, SA Labour Bulletin, 16, 3 (1992), pp.40-51; L Bethlehem, S Buhlungu, O Crankshaw and C White, “Co-determination vs co-option, SA Labour Bulletin, (January/February), pp.12-19; M Alfred, and M Potter, People Really Matter. (Randburg: Knowledge Resources,1995), pp.235-237.



the SA Chemical Workers Union (SACWU) (NACTU)<sup>22</sup>. A similar pattern of developments emerged within Lever Brothers as had occurred at P G Bison which resulted in an agreed common set of “values” to guide the company.

The history of industrial relations in South Africa with its racial-socio-political dynamics, its radical ideological divergence between management and labour, and the politically based struggle in which COSATU unions were involved, created for most companies at the time a near insurmountable task of entering into meaningful participative schemes with their workers. The public debate is well recorded.<sup>23</sup> These programmes were not favoured by union hierarchies as they blurred national trade union strategies for control of workers in industry by more traditional confrontational methods and in terms of national liberation strategies. They also treated such programmes as subtle productivity increase methods with no real benefit to the workers. The Secretary of the CWIU at Lever Brothers, Maydon Wharf when interviewed stated, “We believe the participation schemes could be a counter strategy in response to our demands” but admitted that “At general meetings, workers did not have a uniform position on rejecting the scheme or amending it.”<sup>24</sup> However, workers on the shopfloor often had different agendas, and relationship building programmes were valued for the improvement they brought into the shopfloor working climate. These ‘sharing’ programmes were among some of the most relevant participative programmes available as they set models for what could be achieved in a radically divided society. They were illustrations of professional HRM practices contributing to resolving shopfloor tension, despite the political turbulence swirling all around the work place.

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<sup>22</sup> No author given, “Unilever: Testing Worker Participation”, S A Labour Bulletin, 17,2 (May/June 1993), pp.44-47.

<sup>23</sup> Jane Barrett, “Participation at Premier: worker empowerment or co-option”, SA Labour Bulletin, 17, 3 (March/April 1993), pp.62-67.; Evans, “Worker participation ...”; Alfred and Potter, “People really Matter”.

<sup>24</sup> No author given, “Unilever...”, p.45.

The need to relate business and industry to its African context was an element that often confronted HRPs and is part of the uniquely South African process of the professionalisation of HR practice. Reference was made in Chapter Two (pp 53-54) to the mines taking this into account with their *Izinduna* and *Izibonda* systems. The research of the NIPR into cultural differences affecting black persons in test batteries created a need to take background differences into account Chapter Four (p.128) illustrated attempts to assist managers and foreman with “Know Your African Worker” seminars to relate to the different cultural backgrounds of those over whom they had charge. In the early 1980s attempts at understanding the cultural implications of ubuntuism began to appear.<sup>25</sup> Ubuntu is described as “humaneness, where people treat each other as human beings, not simply as instruments or tools and where people become committed to one another as human beings.... so that if one is in trouble others immediately... do something about it.”<sup>26</sup> The research and application into African cultural values was often responded to with resentment and feelings of paternalism. Some of the reaction arose from ideological opposition, arguing that culture was being used to exploit workers. But during this period, ubuntuism began to be discussed as a value that needed to be considered as a truly African contribution that could benefit the work climate. Once writers like Lovemore Mbigi began to contribute to the discourse on ubuntu, new attention arose around its possibilities to contribute to work place relations. Mbigi introduced ubuntu practices successfully at the Eastern Highlands Tea

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<sup>25</sup> Gillian Godsell, “Work Value Differences in South African Organisations: A Study and Some Conclusions.” National Institute of Personnel Research. CSIR Johannesburg. Pers 359. 1983. Godsell explains her research findings in respect of the concept of ubuntu among workers. D A L Coldwell and A P Moerdyk, “Paradigms Apart: Black Managers in a White Man’s World”, SA Journal of Business Management, 12, (1981), pp.70-76. These insights are based on Coldwell’s PhD research where he modelled sources of stress. The two authors analysed stress among black workers on the mines which brought to the fore the conflict between a traditional cultural acceptance of ubuntu that clashed with the western individualism of white styles of management and leadership.

<sup>26</sup> Ezekiel Mphahlele quoted by Godsell, 1983, p.39. Also N C Manganyi. *Exiles and Homecoming: A Biography of E’skia Mphahlele*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983, p.8., in M W Makgoba. (Ed), African Renaissance: The New Struggle. (Sandton: Mafube, 1999).

Estates in Zimbabwe in the 1980s and utilised this experience in communicating his ideas in South Africa on an African style of participative management.<sup>27</sup> In the 1990s seminars, presentations, journal articles and books began to suggest that HRM could benefit greatly by including the application of ubuntuism.<sup>28</sup> Much of the interest in the potential benefits to industry of ubuntuism, arose from the experience of the Japanese cultural model, which had contributed to Japan's success as an industrial nation. HRPs who explored the implementation of ubuntu believed that if applied correctly, it could be of benefit to South African industry.

In a survey conducted of seventeen large companies in late 1995, only one company reported to have embraced ubuntu as a business strategy, although others did admit to attempting to take into account some of the philosophy of ubuntu, but for them it was not a management concept.<sup>29</sup> Nampak, a large packaging company, had integrated elements of the ubuntu philosophy into their management style. Neil Cumming, HR Director, reported that the company had "unashamedly introduced symbols and rituals of Africa in their pursuit of world class standards", but stated, "Some managers are cautiously embracing the new approach, but scientific, logical business school management is antithetical to ubuntu. Our Nampak College exposes managers to a synthesis of western logicity and African humanism." The jury is still out in evaluating success. Where applied it appears as a genuine attempt to bring African insight to western production techniques. Ubuntu as a collective form of humanistic caring, may be contrasted with the western individualistic

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<sup>27</sup> Lovemore Mbigi and Wilna-Themba Westbrook, "In Search of the African Business Renaissance: The New Struggle", People Dynamics, (February 1998), pp.22-28.

<sup>28</sup> Such publications as: P Christie, R Lessem and L Mbigi, African Management: Philoophical Concepts and Practical Applications (Johannesburg: Knowledge resources, 1994); R Lessem and B Nussbaum, Sawubona Africa (Wynberg: Zebra Press, 1996).

<sup>29</sup> Mike Alfred and Meave Potter, "Investigating Ubuntu". Quarterly Informer, March 1996. The Quarterly Informer is an investigative quarterly report presenting practically based studies on issues of importance to HR practitioners.

origins of personnel management in the form of welfare workers. But as observed in this study welfare services gave way to other systematised benefit services funded by companies, some of these forced on them by trade unions, such as maternity leave and increased leave benefits.

An indication of the issues influencing HRM focus may be judged from the theme of each monthly issue of the *IPM Journal* from June 1986-March 1987.<sup>30</sup> Of the ten themes presented, three dealt with social responsibility issues, such as housing and education and a fourth with black advancement. HR departments developed housing and education policies whereby companies could uplift the level of employee housing and education of employee's dependants. Larger companies allocated HR staff full-time to these programmes. These matters became an essential part of the process of professionalism that was occurring during this period. It is appropriate to ask, whether HR practitioner involvement in these 'company social responsibility' projects fell within their professional HR function or whether it became company policy so as to buy off political pressure? Did it mean that HRPs who did not contribute to these social and community needs, could be censured for failure to act professionally? The question relates to an understanding of how to define professionalism in human resource practice. No record could be found of such debate or of the question having been asked during this period

### **Developments Within the Institute of Personnel Management**

The mid to late 1980s was an extremely active period for the IPM. An indication may be gained from its growing income and expenditure. The Income for 1984 for the first time exceeded R1 million, at over R1.2 million and a slight over expenditure on that figure. It was a sign that the IPM had become a significant operation, demanding sound business and

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<sup>30</sup> IPM Journal: Monthly Themes: June 1986 - March 1987. See Appendix 5.2.

financial management. Close monitoring of income and expenditure by the Executive committee and the new Executive Director, Wilhelm Crous. is noted from Executive and Council minutes, which showed a more business orientated and disciplined approach to administering the affairs of the growing IPM.

In 1984 the constitution was amended which included updating the definition of “personnel management” and the aim of the IPM <sup>31</sup>

“Personnel management” is the planning, organizing, directing and controlling of the procurement, development, compensation, integration, maintenance, and separation of human resources which includes training and development and industrial relations to the end that individual, organizational and societal objectives are accomplished.

It is the aim of the Institute to influence and assist in the development and utilization of the country’s human resources in the interest of the South African community as a whole, including the promotion and development of the highest standards of competence and ethical conduct amongst its members.

Although the term “personnel management” is used, the new definitions show a broader perception of the human resource management function in keeping with newer concepts and a more complex environment. The call for high levels of competence and ethical conduct had a weakness due to the IPM having no effective means of enforcing professional standards on HRPs.

The growth in the activities of the IPM and its confidence in its future may be gauged by the decision in 1984 to look for premises of its own and to this end launched a building fund. Training services had grown, Diploma administration, Annual Convention organisation and other activities all required extra space for the enlarged staff.

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<sup>31</sup> IPM Executive committee minutes, 2/8/1984

The IPM's early concern over breakaway specialists groups, who felt they were not obtaining the service they required from the IPM, continued. The South African Society for Training and Development (SASTD) wanted their own statutory recognition, but had been informed by the Department of Manpower that "they were not in the same market as they were also concerned with technical skills".<sup>32</sup> The Minister of Manpower had stated that there should be only "one statutory recommendation in the field of human resource management." In the meantime the SABPP awaited a response from the Minister to their most recent application for recognition based on a self-regulatory system. The IPM responded to the SASTD initiative by recommending ways be found for the two organisations to work together on the basis that "there was room for everyone", by undertaking joint events, co-operating on overseas speakers and closer liaison at branch level.

The IPM saw the need to establish contact with the Black Management Forum (BMF) and late in 1984 the Executive Director, Wilhelm Crous, met with their President, James Negota, to discuss ways and means of working closer together. They agreed that liaison would be kept at a "very low profile" but that the IPM "would assist them in every way we can."<sup>33</sup> The nature of the relationship between the two bodies was illustrative of the political climate at the time, where black organisations, either on principle or for pragmatic reasons, chose not to be seen co-operating or fraternising with 'white' run organisations, as the IPM was perceived to be.

The declaration of a State of Emergency by the Government in 1986 led to a series of detentions without trial. These actions by the State, especially the detention of trade unionists, had a detrimental effect on employer- employee relationships. Employers

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<sup>32</sup> IPM Executive committee minutes, 2/10/1984

<sup>33</sup> IPM, Directors Report, minutes of Executive Committee, 7/12/1984.



became increasingly concerned over the negative effects of government repression on their workers, especially in regard to the detaining of trade unionists. The IPM did not have a record of outspokenness on national issues. However, in a telex to the Minister of Law and Order, Louis le Grange, the Executive Director of the IPM, urged the Government to step up the reform process as the only way of resolving problems. The IPM called for detained unionists to be charged or released. The telex read, "As long as blacks did not have a political forum at the highest level, trade unions would be forced to get involved in issues outside the workplace."<sup>34</sup>

IPM branches had been unaware that a telex had been sent to the minister. A request followed, that in future, where a stand on a national issue was to be taken, the branches should be informed by telex prior to a press release. After a number of months, on 25 September 1986, the minister replied, stating that the "South African Police does not intervene in bona fide trade union activities... but acts only where necessary to restore law and order...."<sup>35</sup>.

The decision to send the telex, although uncomfortable for the more conservative members, heralded a change in the IPM approach to national political issues. It became an important turning point for the IPM's credibility in South Africa and overseas. This foray by the IPM into the political arena may be interpreted as an expression of growing concern over the government's handling of a deteriorating labour climate that disrupted rather than aided attempts by companies to improve industrial relations and in consequence had negative economic effects.

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<sup>34</sup> The Star, 7 July 1986. "IPM Speaks out on Detention of Trade Unionists" IPM Journal, 5, 2 (July 1986), p 1.

<sup>35</sup> Louis le Grange, Minister of Law and Order, to Mr Wilhelm Crous, Executive Director, IPM. Telex message, 86-09-25. IPM files and copy in researcher's files.

The IPM during this period began to give consideration to the damaging effects of the political turbulence, the lack of economic growth and the role the IPM should play in these matters. The Executive Director, Wilhelm Crous, in his proposals for the Business Plan for 1987, stated that there would be no economic improvement in South Africa “until the political problems being faced have been confronted and sorted out”. This prediction reflected a growing conviction within the South African business community that radical changes were called for in the interests of all South Africans.

In an endeavour to provide assistance to members attempting to implement workable affirmative action plans, the Director circulated in February 1987 to all IPM Councillors an “IPM Employment Code and Guidelines” for comment.<sup>36</sup> The Code was part of the Objectives of the Strategic Plan and was seen as an expression of the IPM’s role as a “change agent”. In an effort to allay concerns of more conservative elements, the Director’s letter explained that the “The Code is not revolutionary. The Fundamental Employee Rights are those that the Government subscribes to and the Code is very similar to other employment codes in the business environment”. It was unique in that it included Implementation Guidelines and a Checklist.

Whether such a Code could be enforced on IPM members was problematic and the letter asked Councillors to give this aspect their consideration. Should the Code have been implemented with that proviso it would have created the need for disciplinary procedures. Although the Code died a quiet death, it had the value of urging members to consider a more proactive role in dealing actively with the realities of the South African workplace. The Code was significant because it provided an important measure for Business to assess their commitment to an “Equal Opportunity Employment Programme”. It recommended a

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<sup>36</sup> IPM, Executive Director to IPM Councillors: letter and copy of IPM Code of Employment and Guidelines; 11 February 1987. IPM Files and copy in researcher’s files.

systematic approach to annual measurement of progress in the hiring, training and promoting of Black persons, females and minority groups in the business.

By the mid 1980s the growing isolation of South Africa had become an important concern for the IPM Board. Continuous efforts had been made to retain and increase the IPM's membership of related African and World bodies. Piet Rossouw, IPM President, speaking at the IPM Annual General Meeting in 1981 explained that the IPM was a 'corresponding member' of the World Federation of Personnel Management Associations (WFPMA) and that they were applying for full membership at the next World Council meeting and anticipated that their application would be approved.

The Board minutes in 1986 record the IPM's ongoing commitment to strive to maintain its international links in the face of efforts to have the IPM expelled and agreed to funds to meet the costs involved. Word had been received that the International Federation of Training and Development Organisations (IFTDO) had been requested to expel the IPM.<sup>37</sup> In an effort to avert this possible action the President, Malcolm Calf, travelled overseas as part of the international membership campaign, which would included attendance at the World Federation of Personnel Management Associations (WFPMA) and as part of this activity, he specifically invited overseas visitors to the Annual Convention free of charge. In July 1986 the IPM President attended the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) convention in St Louis, USA. The following year the IFTDO did not invite a South African to address their convention. However, it was agreed by the Executive Committee that the IPM should be represented at the American Society of Personnel Administration (ASPA), the IFTDO, European Association of Personnel Management (EAPM) and ASTD conventions that year and nominated various leading HR practitioners

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<sup>37</sup> IPM Board minutes, 28/5/1986.

to attend to provide for a high level presence.<sup>38</sup> It was further agreed that it was essential that every effort be made to send black delegates to overseas conventions.<sup>39</sup>

In August 1987, Dr Johan Gouws, the new IPM President, addressed the WFPMA in London and reported that he believed that ties had been strengthened between the two organisations. An Executive Committee member of the WFPMA, Mr Mannie Hoffman, addressed the IPM Council in September 1989, and inter alia, mentioned that the President's address at their Convention had made an impression on those present. The Executive meetings of 1988 indicate considerable contact had been maintained and developed with Southern African countries, such as Zimbabwe (the top IPM Diploma student in 1986 had come from Harare), Malawi, Swaziland and Lesotho. During the 1988 - 1991 period the Executive committee had a permanent agenda item dealing with liaison with Africa. South African delegates actively participated in meetings to discuss the formation of an African Association and five delegates had attended three meetings in Paris. The IPM board acknowledged that it would be a slow process and that an African association would not be appropriate at the time. South Africa had to be content with limited relations in Southern Africa.

The PMA and its successor, the Personnel Practitioners Association (PPA) actively opposed the IPM's efforts to obtain and retain international recognition (see later in this chapter). The PMA/PPA used their contacts through the ANC's international network overseas to 'white ant' the IPM's efforts. to continue its international links and memberships. International isolation was part of an isolation strategy to weaken the South African government.<sup>40</sup> The IPM on the other hand, recognised it needed to present itself as

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<sup>38</sup> IPM Executive committee minutes, 24/4/1987.

<sup>39</sup> No record could be located to show which black representative attended which convention.

<sup>40</sup> J B Magwaza, interview with researcher, 15/4/1998.

a unified organisation representing all South Africa's HR practitioners if it wanted to retain international acceptance .

Three reasons appear to have been behind the IPM's activities on the international scene. The first, to continue receiving the professional benefits of keeping in touch with international developments, much of which came through personal networking contacts. The second, the unwritten encouragement of the South African government to bona fide professional bodies to assist in staving off the growing isolation of the country by maintaining or extending links with overseas organisations. Some of the senior IPM members were reported to have had close contacts with government. The third, retaining international contacts served the interests of the business community as well.

During 1986 the IPM developed a new Strategic Plan to "reposition" the Institute for the following five years based on projected developments in South Africa. and how the IPM should respond.<sup>41</sup> In 1984 a similar exercise had taken place for a projected five year period. The new Plan superseded the earlier five year plan, being now based on a recognition of South Africa as "a society in transition" and that the "personnel fraternity" needed to take the coming changes into account and "to influence these changes from a human resource/manpower point of view.". The plan was designed not only for action by the IPM, but to provide guidance to HRPs. The IPM as a "professional" association set out to equip its members to play a transforming function within their organisations and in their communities

Between 1987 and 1990 the IPM placed emphasis on encouraging the implementation by companies of a social policy. The IPM Journal during this time carried various articles on company assisted housing for staff, Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs), and other

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<sup>41</sup> "IPM's Strategic Plan": an interview with Dr Johan Gouws and Malcolm Calf, IPM Journal, 5,8 (January 1987), pp5-7.

assistance schemes. Housing, unemployment, job creation, education, equal employment opportunities were now agenda items which required the attention of HRPs. These issues became part of their ‘professional’ task to assist in transforming South Africa and a “Social Policy Resource Kit” was prepared and distributed.<sup>42</sup> It contained articles and materials to guide HRPs and workshop material for a range of topics from Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) to AIDs. The new emphasis resulted in a number of IPM branches becoming involved in a variety of projects supporting the new direction. The Natal Coastal branch, for example, in 1990 created a “Social Responsibility Portfolio” which engaged in a number of projects assisting schools in townships using branch funds which had been accumulated over the years and now available to spend on such projects.<sup>43</sup> Although the activities of the portfolio are reported on in the branch committee minutes over a three year period, these branch social responsibility activities appear as peripheral to its major function of developing member knowledge and skills.

The IPM’s social policy recommendations reflected activity in this field in companies. The 1980s and early 1990s has been portrayed as a time when industrial relations dominated HRM. But social policy led HRPs to become committed to what became known as corporate social responsibility (CSR). It has been estimated that business expended billions of rands in social development programmes, such as, housing schemes, school building programmes, libraries, building and equipping school laboratories, clinics, creches, assistance to black entrepreneurs and training programmes. Most of the aid went unheralded. The extent of this investment, where business gave that much attention to community needs, was unknown elsewhere in the world.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> IPM, “Human Resource Management Kits: Social Policy Resource Kit”. (1<sup>st</sup> Edition). (Johannesburg: IPM, December, 1990). 150 pages.

<sup>43</sup> IPM Natal Coastal branch minutes, 1984-1993. IPM KZN branch files.

<sup>44</sup> Mike Alfred, “Signing off nearly 40 years of H R involvement”, Manpower Brief, (September 1997), pp.2-9



No effective evaluation of this social policy effort has been located. These activities did allow business to report that it had expended significant amounts in reasonable attempts to uplift communities disadvantaged through apartheid. Such activities are beyond what would be included in the undertakings of professional human resource institutes elsewhere in the world, but may be interpreted as resulting from the unique South African environment, where a white dominated association's credibility required identification with the aspirations of the emerging new black political forces. The IPM engaged in social policy activity as professionally acceptable, but at this stage did not identify itself with political forces working for change in South Africa.

The call for the IPM to confront pressing issues of the time had been raised in public by a Port Elizabeth member, M Hill. In an open letter to the certain newspapers and directly with the National Director under the heading, "The IPM and Social-Political Responsibility", he called for a public statement from the IPM Council to declare its position on such issues as apartheid, influx control, the Group Areas Act effect on housing, transportation, and the like.<sup>45</sup> The IPM executive replied in an open letter to Hill stating that the "general consensus" was that "the IPM was not a political organisation and that such issues should only be aired within the institute."<sup>46</sup> The executive felt there were "other avenues" Hill could have used "before he contacted the press." The reply reinforced the perception of the IPM's reluctance to enter the political debate.

In April 1987 the Personnel Services division proposed their division's name be changed to the "Human Resources Management" division. This was the first formal indication within the IPM that the term "personnel" may be no longer appropriate to describe its function.

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<sup>45</sup> The Sowetan and Daily Despatch, 31 January 1986; Business Day, 7 February 1986; IPM Journal, 4, 8 (April 1986).

<sup>46</sup> IPM Executive committee minutes, 21/2/1986.

The Division believed that its newly proposed title would more suitably reflect the new emphasis emerging in the managing of people at work. It is of note that during the 1980s the Annual Convention theme titles used the term “human resource management” rather than “personnel”, which again signalled the general acceptance that “personnel” was no longer the term of choice.

The executive committee in September 1987 discussed the need for greater black representation on the Council and approved the appointment to the IPM Publications Board of Lot Ndlovu, Reuel Khoza and Eric Mafuna, all prominent members of the BMF.<sup>47</sup>

In an effort to make a contribution to the heated national debate on public holidays, the IR division of the IPM in 1987, sent a memorandum to the President’s Council (part of the new tricameral parliamentary government system) on the enquiry into public holidays. The IPM argued for an understanding of the sensitivities on public holidays. Its stance was in keeping with that of leading companies, which called for a set number of core days and for the balance to be negotiated at company level. This was followed by a request to the minister concerned to meet an IPM delegation to discuss the issues. This intervention by a division of the IPM illustrates a growing willingness by the Institute to take a stand on politically controversial matters.

During this period of changing emphases in HRM, the IPM restructured the IPM Diploma to meet new educational needs of students. A new format of courses was made available from 1985 with the first graduates emerging in 1987. The changes created three options for students, namely, Personnel Services Management, Industrial Relations Management and Training Management as major subjects, with supporting subjects in business studies which included production management, economics, management accounting and labour

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<sup>47</sup> IPM Executive committee minutes: 26/9/1987.

economics. By 1989 over 2000 students had registered for the diploma, resulting in a 23% growth in students since the launch of the new diploma. The Human Sciences Research Council evaluated the diploma and accredited it with a M+3 level which gave the diploma an enhanced status of a three year under-graduate degree.<sup>48</sup> To meet the more stringent demands on HRPs and to keep up with some other tertiary HRM programmes a further updating of the diploma was recommended to be undertaken in 1994, but no action followed.

In an effort to upgrade the image of the IPM through its journal, the *IPM Journal* was professionally evaluated resulting in recommendations for its replacement. This took place in 1992 with the launch of *People Dynamics*. The new magazine was a more upmarket, glossy magazine, in keeping with an improved marketing image and wider appeal in its articles which the IPM wished to project.

As part of the IPM's strategy to provide a way of incorporating 'opposition' groups, Marius Bester of the SA Municipal Personnel Practitioners Association was co-opted onto the Council. This Association had been in existence for many years representing the special interests of HRPs in municipal affairs and had consistently declined involvement with the IPM.<sup>49</sup>

### **Developments within the South African Board of Personnel Practice**

The IPM Board decided in 1984 to renew its efforts to obtain statutory recognition of personnel practice and a meeting took place with the Department of Manpower to discuss the importance of registration. On the basis of that meeting a memorandum was sent to the

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<sup>48</sup> IPM Council minutes, 16/2/1990.

<sup>49</sup> IPM Council minutes, 15/11/1990.

Minister of Manpower Utilisation together with a draft bill. After some negotiation a Personnel Practice Bill was published in 1985.<sup>50</sup> But in 1986, by cabinet decision, the Bill was not presented to Parliament. No written record could be located which stated the grounds for rejection. With a formal legislated procedure unavailable, the SABPP continued on its course of action registering practitioners and technicians on a non-statutory basis. By the end of that year more than 2000 practitioners had been registered. The IPM which had established the SABPP continued to provide support for its efforts to obtain official professional status for personnel practitioners.

The SABPP re-structured itself in 1987 to make itself more representative of the employer community. For example, the Federated Chamber of Industries (FCI), the Afrikaanse Handels Instituut (AHI) and the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce (NAFCOC) each were offered one seat, with two allocated to government ministerial representatives. The IPM was allowed two members and the Institute of Industrial Psychology, one. The membership of the Board shows that it now operated independently of the IPM, although still closely aligned. In 1988 a public relations drive was launched with the aid of public relations consultants and the first newsletter followed

The SABPP's executive committee was again re-structured in 1989, this time bringing onto the the board the chairpersons of the various committees who began planning to lay the ground work for a "Board" examination. Of the twenty four board members, three were black, namely M S Khumalo, Z W Ntuli and M Sebesho (the latter representing NAFCOC) and in keeping with the board's orientation, five of the board were academics from universities. The large number of Board members with an Afrikaans background may be attributable to the more entrenched presence of industrial psychology at the main Afrikaans universities which had provided the academic basis for personnel management until HRM

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<sup>50</sup> Government Gazette Vol 244 No 9957, Draft Personnel Practice Bill, 4 October 1985.

established itself as a separate discipline in its own right. The re-structuring of the executive committee brought broader representivity for the stakeholders in HRM practice and thereby allowed the SABPP to claim to be a representative standard setter for HR practice in South Africa.

In July 1989 the SABPP made important amendments to the regulations governing registration, which allowed for greater recognition of experience as against the earlier emphasis on academic qualifications. The amendment followed representations by those who felt greater recognition needed to be afforded to experience in the early stages of the establishment of the SABPP. This amendment accommodated the appeal, especially by black persons who had experience but not the required academic qualifications, of which, they maintained, they were deprived for historical reasons and could only obtain academic knowledge through part time courses. This amendment allowed such persons to register as “practitioners” and not be limited to lower “technician” status.<sup>51</sup> The amendment was a turn around on statements made a year earlier where it was declared that there would be no lowering of registrations standards.<sup>52</sup> The amendment did lower professional standards, but as a concession, it allowed the accommodation of previously disadvantaged persons and illustrated the dilemma of the professionalising process in South Africa. By the end of the year the 3000 mark for registrations had been passed. In the same year a full-time registrar was appointed. In 1990 the first ‘formal’ Annual Report appeared for the fiscal year 1989.

By 1990 the SABPP had become a mature organisation, despite not having reached its goal of formal recognition for personnel practice. In that year the SABPP launched its Mission, Philosophy and Strategy and also a Development Fund. Work on the accreditation of the

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<sup>51</sup> No author given, “Amendments to SABPP Regulations”, IPM Journal, 8.3 (October 1989). See Appendix 5.3 for details. Also: Sunday Times-Business Times “Changing Face of Personnel, 15/10/1989.

<sup>52</sup> Sunday Times-Business Times “Standards Lacking in Personnel.” 2/10/1988.

human resource management curricula at universities, technikons and the IPM commenced as a fundamental project to ensure the level of education and training at recognised tertiary institutions maintained a standard to produce candidates who could attain professional level required for registration. A three year cycle of on-site evaluation of HR training by a panel of experts commenced on the basis of invitation from the training institution (university of technikon). The Rand Afrikaans University became the first to invite the accreditation panel to evaluate its HRM teaching and education standards. The Board believed in principle that the panel's evaluating role would be viewed constructively by institutions wanting to maintain and improve their standards. As part of a longer term strategy to retain contact with the Department of Manpower, a briefing of the Minister in his office was arranged where the developments within the SABPP were outlined.

The difference between the SABPP and the IPM had become a source of confusion for many practitioners, who did not fully grasp the different roles played by the two organisations. The IPM's East Rand Branch in 1984 identified this uncertainty following a general survey of members concerning their feelings about the IPM and its activities.<sup>53</sup> Whyte, the Chairman of the SABPP and who had led the drive for statutory recognition, explained the differences between the two bodies on the basis of a model that had been used from inception, that of professional chartered accountants and professional engineers, where for example, chartered accountants had an Institute as well as the Public Accountants' and Auditors Board.<sup>54</sup> The deciding factor lay in each regulated profession setting its own standards for registration, education and training of new entrants. These standards and required professional conduct could only be credible when they were set by an impartial body that stood outside the member organisation of the profession. The IPM could not be a "player" and the "referee" at the same time. The decision to establish the SABPP as a

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<sup>53</sup> IPM, East Rand branch, "Survey of IPM members". 1984. IPM files.

<sup>54</sup> Whyte, "IPM and the SABPP: How do they differ?" IPM Journal, 9, 2 (February 1990).



“referee” had been by a vote of the members of the IPM.

The IPM in its turn promoted and developed practitioners through its activities such as the diploma, its Annual Convention and its Journal. The SABPP focussed on standard setting in areas such as, registration, education, candidate training and norms of professional conduct. The SABPP confined itself to ‘personnel practice’ and the unique role of the functional specialist. As part of this function it registered practitioners in two categories, ‘practitioner’ and ‘technician’ according to mandatory regulation and a set of qualifying standards. The IPM, in contrast had a much wider task concerned with the application of personnel/human resource management practice. Although the IPM had two levels of membership, “Full” and “Associate”, it based membership on less stringent qualifications. The IPM designed its own Code of Conduct as a guide to members, but it existed in name only. The SABPP, like other professional bodies, possessed a disciplinary system, where loss of registration, through misconduct, could be a serious setback for professionals if they were struck from the register. As registration with the SABPP was voluntary, not statutory as with accountants and engineers, disciplinary action would not mean the loss of right to practice.

The distinction between the IPM and the SABPP are at times a fine line, resulting in understandable confusion for the less initiated. However, for many HRPs to pay both Board and IPM membership fees became expensive and numerous complaints began to be heard over costs against benefits received. Over time a pattern began to emerge of HRPs deciding on one or other institution. To assist the clarification the IPM Council in 1988 proposed that the SABPP should be removed from the IPM constitution as it had become an autonomous body and “the IPM theoretically has no authority over the SABPP.”<sup>55</sup> The confusion continued and in 1992 the IPM decided to produce a brochure to explain the

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<sup>55</sup> IPM Council minutes, 11/10/1988.

differences.<sup>56</sup>

In February 1991, Gary Whyte, the Chairman of the Board, died suddenly depriving the SABPP of the leading campaigner for the formal recognition of human resource practice in the country. He became known as the “Father of Personnel Practice as a profession” in South Africa, having been the pioneer and driving force behind the SABPP and had worked for two decades to upgrade and professionalise the standards of human resource practice.<sup>57</sup> Whyte had over thirty years of personnel management experience, first at company senior level and then from 1970 as a consultant from within his own consulting company. He had brought insight and commitment to the functioning of the SABPP. His vision had been of registered HR practitioners who could be viewed with the same esteem as professional chartered accountants (CA) or professional engineers (Pr Eng).

Wilhelm Crous was elected as Chairman of the SABPP to replace the late Gary Whyte. In his Chairman’s Annual Review for 1991 he dealt almost exclusively with political changes in South Africa. He expressed optimism over positive outcomes through negotiations at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) and for HRM<sup>58</sup>. He referred to the critical requirement needed to “upgrade human capital” to meet the new challenges if South Africa was to succeed in its reconstruction. HRP’s would be in the forefront of these developments, he reasoned, and the Board would have an essential role in ensuring that the quality of practitioners met this need. Crous’ reference to ‘human capital’ indicated that a new, more contemporary terminology had made its way into South Africa, which now described human resources in terms that placed a quantifiable element on employees.

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<sup>56</sup> IPM Executive minutes, 11/10/1992.

<sup>57</sup> Professor H P Langenhoven, SABPP Annual Report 1990.

<sup>58</sup> SABPP, Chairman’s Review of 1991, Annual Report 1992.

In 1993 the Board commissioned the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) to conduct research into future development of the ‘personnel practitioner’. The detailed study investigated the demand and supply of practitioners for the period 1996-2001 and changes in competency requirements of practitioners.<sup>59</sup> Published in 1995 at a cost of R165 000, the study revealed an over supply of personnel practitioners that would continue to 2001, which had resulted partly from the large number of students taking HRM and industrial psychology courses.<sup>60</sup> The report anticipated the oversupply would increase due to the unregulated nature of the field. Initially white graduates exceeded blacks, but from 1980 the trend was steadily being reversed.<sup>61</sup> By 1989 the number of female graduates began to exceed the male graduates.<sup>62</sup> The demand for black practitioners was expected to increase faster than for whites, due to the under-representation of blacks and the need for affirmative action. Some of the oversupply of practitioners with qualifications, such as psychology, which had arisen largely because there were no specific entry requirements into personnel practice nor compulsory professional registration. A further complicating factor in the oversupply resulted from organisations reducing their HR functions and outsourcing these to independent consultants.

The study also revealed that although the image of the ‘profession’ had improved in recent years, HR practice was not yet regarded on par with other professions such as chartered accountancy and engineering. Students with an ‘interest’ in people and without traditionally ‘hard’ subjects such as, maths and physical science, tended to enrol in HR subjects,

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<sup>59</sup> Elize van Zyl and Linda Albertyn, The Supply and Demand of Personnel Practitioners in South Africa, Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council (March 1995). See also, Elize van Zyl and Linda Albertyn, “Personnel Practitioners: Results of an HRSC Survey.” People Dynamics, 13, 5 (May 1995), pp.34-37.

<sup>60</sup> Van Zyl and Albertyn, Supply and Demand, p.41. See also Appendix 5.4.

<sup>61</sup> Van Zyl and Albertyn, Supply and Demand, p.33. See also Appendix 5.5.

<sup>62</sup> Van Zyl and Albertyn, Supply and Demand, p.32. See also Appendix 5.6.

creating the impression that the ‘best’ potential students were not attracted to HR courses. The study suggested that the oversupply would result in new graduates competing for jobs with students from a wide variety of other fields of study. The study showed that the oversupply of students to jobs could be as high as 7:1 by 2001. To avoid this situation stricter entry requirements, more demanding subject matter and improved selection procedures would need to be considered.

The HSRC study confirmed trends in HRM practice.<sup>63</sup> First, the growing awareness of the importance of the HR function had improved the status of HRPs with HRM having moved to the core of business operations, requiring in-depth understanding of business operations. Second, the traditional day-to-day HR functions were now being conducted by line managers with HRPs undertaking a more strategic and consulting role, calling for greater skills. Participative management and affirmative action called for new styles of management facilitated mostly by HRPs who were required to lead organisational transformation and the development of multi-cultural teams. Third, the strong emphasis on training and development called for innovative leadership from HRPs to rapidly re-focus and upgrade existing potential. Four, adaptation to the new socio-political environment required practitioners to help integrate the “new South Africa” into the work place, which called for involvement to a much greater extent in ‘reconstruction and development’ programmes and upliftment of local communities.

The research provided important data to enable academic institutions and employers to gain an insight into trends in HR practice and adjust forward planning accordingly.

The study further assisted the SABPP in identifying the changes required in education and

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<sup>63</sup> Legg, “Sources of Stress” provides a literature review which identifies these trends and showed that South Africa was closely tracking directions in the developed world.

training of practitioners and to be able to set standards in keeping with future projections.<sup>64</sup> Although an expensive exercise the study provided important research data essential for the conduct of professional HR practice. It illustrated the role of a professional body in providing the leadership and direction necessary for long term planning of a professional education and identifying supply problems within the profession.

By the end of 1994, the SABPP had evaluated and accredited fourteen tertiary educational institutions offering HRM education, eleven of which were universities. Through this activity it began a process of ensuring the quality and standards of HRP education and where necessary, recommending improvements. This evaluating and accrediting function provided an essential service in ensuring that practitioners who emerged from these institutions could be relied upon to competently carry out their HR functions. In this role the SABPP contributed significantly to the process of the professionalisation of HRM.

The Board supported the introduction of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act passed in October 1995, which inter alia, established the National Qualification Framework (NQF).<sup>65</sup> The government envisaged far reaching proposals affecting education and training in creating a single NQF which is outcomes based, allowed for prior learning and changed existing structures of standard setting. Previously sundry bodies would be replaced by National Standards Bodies (NSB) for the various disciplines. The Board, anticipating the Act, moved swiftly to ensure it adjusted its approach in such a way as to meet the anticipated changes and its impact on standard setting for education and training of HRPs. Adjustments took place in the procedures for evaluating and accrediting curricula to meet new requirements. The Board saw its role as providing leadership in

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<sup>64</sup> SABPP, Chairman's Annual Review of 1994, Annual Report 1995.

<sup>65</sup> S A Qualifications Authority Act 58 of 1995 (SAQA). This is arguably the most meaningful legislation ever to effect education and training in South Africa.



preparing professional HRPs to meet the demands of international global competitiveness. In keeping with the intentions of SAQA, the Board entered a joint venture with the IPM and other stakeholders, to facilitate “the setting up of a body to define, set and accredit standards for the human resource profession.”<sup>66</sup> These arrangements further enhanced the SABPPs contribution to the professionalisation process

By the end of the period, the SABPP presented, in summary form, its current understanding of what it meant by a “profession”.<sup>67</sup> The parentheses in the list indicate the Board’s dilemma in each statement according to this researcher. The leaflet asserted:

- \* A mature profession was self-regulating. (The failure to obtain statutory registration had been a setback as there was no legal backing, but self-regulation of a profession was normal);
- \*. It set responsible standards for the profession that were affordable to all.(The Board had begun setting those standards);
- \* It provided a code of professional conduct. (The Board had created a Code, but lacking statutory registration, deprived the Board of the power to exert the ultimate disciplinary sanction of removal from the register, which would debar from practice.);
- \* It established professional boundaries. (Human resource management was practised by diverse people, from line managers in factories to managers of sports teams and sundry others, such as labour lawyers and HR consultants. It was difficult to define professional boundaries); and
- \* It had its own independent and autonomous body standing between practitioners, the public, employers and training institutions. (The Board had achieved this, but had not adequately resolved the confusion over the role of the IPM and this may be

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<sup>66</sup> SABPP Annual Report 1996. Report of the Chairman for 1995.

<sup>67</sup> Promotional leaflet issued by the SABPP, “What is a Profession?” Undated.



attributed to the lack of statutory registration).

The SABPP ended the period by having strengthened its role in relating SAQA requirements to HR practice. However, having launched itself on the model of statutory recognition in 1976, which application failed on two occasions, it was unable to obtain the leverage with which statutory recognition would have given it. Despite that setback, the Board had moved the process of professionalisation forward in a way that the IPM could not have achieved.

### **Emergence of the Personnel Practitioner's Association (PPA)**

The black Personnel Contact Group Sub Committee, which had met in 1983 (see page 109), following the demise of the PMA, had continued its planning activities to create a new formal forum to meet the needs of BPPs. The planning Sub-Committee listed the grievances and problems facing black personnel practitioners (BPPs). Of the seventeen listed problems and needs, ten of the more significant are given below.<sup>68</sup>

1. Black Personnel and Training Practitioners (BPTP) do not have a platform where they can share experiences, information, skills and expertise
2. Aspirant and newly qualified BPTP were not benefitting from the experience of their older black colleagues.
2. BPTPs had no protection arising from pressure/criticism from employers, employees or their agents (trade unions) and the wider society.
3. Absence of a feeling of belonging and identity on the part of BPTPs.
4. No perceived and meaningful contribution made by BPTPs to the wider society
5. Ill defined and misuse of job titles by and of BPTPs.
6. Incongruent salaries.
7. The IPM did not cater for the special needs of BPTPs.
8. Some BPTPs are still used as window-dressing.

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<sup>68</sup> Report of the Personnel Contact Group Sub-Committee: 21/5/1983.

9. The integrity of some BPTPs is at times highly suspect.

The list reveals a sense of alienation by BPTPs in relation to their function, grievances over perceived racial discrimination and their continued resentment over neglect by the IPM. There is no record that these issues were raised and dealt with openly in their companies and with their white colleagues at work. However, in some companies black graduates, of whom BPPs were included, had structured internal channels to express their frustrations concerning their perceived grievances. For instance, Unilever in Durban had such a forum through which black graduates were able to discuss and present to executive management their grievances.

An interview with one BPP explained the resentment and frustration which characterised the experience of many BPPs. In the interview he outlined how their role was dominated by a dilemma in which they “felt non-acceptance by management and non-acceptance by employees.” They wanted to work for change in South Africa through their position as HR practitioners, but “when blacks became managers it was expected of them to become the voice of the union members to the company, ... but we could not act like trade unionists. What were we to do? It was difficult.” Their problem was further complicated on two fronts. Their home communities expected them, as managers with cars and telephones, to play an active role in relieving distress in their communities. Furthermore, they had a political role and were expected to say whether they were ANC or IFP (in KwaZulu Natal), which could lead to other problems. They had expected the IPM to understand their needs and dilemmas and were very resentful that there was no understanding or acceptance of their problems and no serious attempt at providing assistance. This frustration led them to create their own black organisation which would cater for their needs.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Bongani Mkhize, interview with researcher 20/7/1998 and 12/8/1998. The interviews are an account of one BPP's experience. He was the Chairman of a Unilever Graduate forum. See Appendix 5.7.

After two meetings in January and February 1984, the Personnel Practitioners Association (PPA) had drafted and agreed a constitution to represent their interests<sup>70</sup> At the inaugural meeting in June 1984 at the Lay Ecumenical Academy in Pietermaritzburg, the constitution was ratified and the PPA was formally launched. Although introduced as a national non-racial body, its entire membership and elected Executive Committee was black and based in KwaZulu Natal.<sup>71</sup> The elected President was Nhlanhla Gasa, with Obed Mlaba as Secretary, and Blade Nzimande as a committee member.<sup>72</sup>

The potential recognition of HR practice as a profession by means of the registration route through the SABPP, created a dilemma for BPPs and led to considerable debate. The IPM had its own concerns at this time as it sought to retain international links and requested a meeting with the newly established PPA to address their concerns over the direction in which the SABPP had moved. A meeting in December 1984 at SA Breweries, Prospecton, attended by forty-four PPA members, discussed the benefits of registration with the SABPP.<sup>73</sup> Here PPA members expressed their concerns and suspicions about the SABPP.. For example, many PPA members would not qualify for registration due to being previously disadvantaged, but who had adequate experience in HRM. The SABPP spokesperson suggested that consideration could be given to a “grandfather clause” which would allow for a once-off inclusion of BPPs who did not have the necessary academic qualifications, but had acquired relevant experience.

BPPs further stated that they had reservation over the two tier structure adopted by the SABPP where the proposed register distinguished between “practitioners” and

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<sup>70</sup> Minutes of the Personnel Practitioners Association 21/1/1984 and 11/2/1984.

<sup>71</sup> City Press. “New Non-Racial Group”, 12 February 1984.

<sup>72</sup> Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting of the Personnel Practitioners Association: 9/6/1984

<sup>73</sup> Report on Personnel Practitioners Association Workshop on Proposed Registration with the Board of Personnel Practice, 9/12/1984.

“technicians”. Concern was expressed by BPPs that the register would relegate most of their members to the lower status of “technicians” as most Blacks were still at junior level as personnel officers in their companies, even though they may have had many years experience. They claimed they had obtained the required qualifications to place them in the higher “practitioner” category, except that by reason of history they had been deprived of their rightful promotion and status. The two tier status was perceived by many BPPs as a subtle means of retaining blacks in a subordinate status and thus reinforcing a perception of racial inferiority. Their concern was based on the grade stratification similar to that in personnel departmental structures in organisations “where practitioners (human resource managers) were white and technicians (human resource officers) were black.”<sup>74</sup>

No resolution was achieved, but the distrust that was inherent in the relationship between the IPM/SABPP and BPPs resulted in registration issues at least having being identified and debated and in other sporadic ad hoc meetings taking place between the two parties.

Following an approach from the PPA, the SABPP suggested a further meeting and provided a detailed set of items it would wish to raise and requested the PPA to provide a similar set of issues reflecting their concerns and proposals.<sup>75</sup> A meeting in March 1986 between the two organisations resulted in adjustments being made for a once-off grandfather/sunset clause, which allowed technician level candidates to register as practitioners on grounds of length of service, rather than academic qualification. The SABPP was not prepared to agree to the reduced levels called for by the PPA, which they maintained would have been detrimental to the professional level that was required.

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<sup>74</sup> Nzimande, “Corporate Guerillas”, p.333. Nzimande in his research is referring to his own direct involvement in these discussions. His own ideological interpretations do not invalidate his own experience in these matters recorded in his study together with the testimony of other BPPs.

<sup>75</sup> Letter from Chairman of SABPP to the Secretary of the PPA, 11/11/1985. PMA files and copy in researcher’s files..

The PPA did not oppose the process of professionalisation in principle.<sup>76</sup> To have rejected the process would have set back their acknowledged need to achieve professional status. Their dilemma lay with the organisations furthering the interests of professionalisation, viz., the IPM and the SABPP. A recognised professional status would assist BPPs to establish themselves in the work situation. First, in terms of employer recognition and second, they hoped workers would see them as ‘neutral’ players, not identified with their employer. The dilemma for BPPs increased as they moved more to the forefront of industrial relations based worker-management confrontations. They often found themselves in agreement with the workers as their comrades in the struggle for freedom, but their job role required them to support a management position. They felt themselves trapped in this dilemma and the attendant confrontations.<sup>77</sup> To maintain their integrity, many sought a form of neutral status which some hoped could be achieved through obtaining a registered professional status. Through professional status they hoped they could mediate in the conflict between labour and capital, employer and employee, in such a way that they would not be seen to be favouring one side or the other.<sup>78</sup>

From the time of opening the register for registration, the SABPP received a steady flow of registrations, mostly white, which confirmed for the IPM leadership that they were addressing a major need. By the beginning of 1985, 1650 persons had registered either as a “practitioner” or as a “technician”.<sup>79</sup> Despite their dilemma, many BPPs, some active

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<sup>76</sup> Nzimande, “Corporate Guerillas”. He outlines the approach of the PPA and its members to registration stating it “would improve and enhance the status of the personnel practitioner as well as personnel practice within and outside the organisation.” p.333. See also, PPA Report 9/12/84.

<sup>77</sup> Bongani Mkhize, interview with researcher, 20/7/1998 and 12/8/1998, expressed the sense of isolation that resulted from this dilemma. See Appendix 5.7

<sup>78</sup> Nzimande, Corporate Guerillas, pp.312-313. Nzimande was a personnel officer at the time of these tensions and knew first hand the dilemma. His thesis title “The Corporate Guerillas” suggests he had found his own method of resolving the dilemma.

<sup>79</sup> IPM, minutes of Council Meeting: 22/2/1985.

within the PPA, choose to register with the SABPP. This action can be interpreted as a recognition that no other options existed. With many of their white colleagues registering, BPPs felt that if they did not register they would be placing themselves in a less favourable competitive position in the job market.

An option would have been for the PPA to build a sufficiently strong membership base which would have enabled them to create their own registering body. They would have been able to call on the precedent of the establishment of two psychological institutes in the early 1960s, namely, SIRSA and PASA, to support such a position, but it would have meant relying on apartheid principles to achieve professional status.

During this period the relationship between the PPA and the IPM was not entirely antagonistic. For example, the Natal Durban Coastal Branch attempted from time to time to establish formal contact with PPA executive and its members, often through members being colleagues in the same company.<sup>80</sup> The parties recognised that relationships were politically sensitive issues and without the likelihood of meaningful co-operation within the current political dispensation as the issues related to wider strategic positions. Both parties accepted that the PPA could not be seen to be having an open working relations with the IPM. The IPM Committee agreed to allow the informal contact to continue as the means of contact. Concern within the IPM over the low attendance of BPP's at IPM meetings, may partly be explained by the anti-IPM stand, but also because there existed transport difficulties for BPPs to attend early evening meetings. The anti-IPM position also contributed to the inability to obtain greater black representation on the IPM committee beyond one black member for a number of years. The committee allowed informal contact to be the best available channel to maintain contact.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> IPM Natal Coastal branch committee minutes, 17/1/84; 15/1/85; 11/3/86; 19/9/86.

<sup>81</sup> The researcher was Branch Chairman during this period and was asked to address the PPA at one of their meetings on an interpretation of the Role of the Personnel Officer, indicating a willingness to



The relationship between the PMA/PPA and the BMF in KwaZulu Natal (KZN) was reportedly strained. Nzimande in his PhD research noted that “Contrary to what one might expect, the relationship between the two organisations had been one of tension and sometimes hostility. Up to the time of the collapse of the PPA there was neither a working relationship nor common forums between the two.”<sup>82</sup> One of the last meetings of the PPA executive debated their relationship with the IPM and the BMF.<sup>83</sup> Nzimande, who was a member of the PPA executive committee identified two reasons for the differences. First, the PPA was Natal based and the BMF was Reef based. The BMF was seen as “trying to impose itself” over the already organised BPPs in KZN. The growth of the BMF in Durban had been restricted for many years due to perceptions within the leadership of the PMA/PPA concerning the BMF. Despite discussions between the two organisations, the BMF did not develop a membership base in Durban similar to their success in other cities in South Africa. The tensions and suspicions, particularly on the side of the PPA, were prevalent during the mid-1980s. Second, the PPA perceived the BMF as “an elitist organisation” which tried to imitate white managers, operated too close to main stream white controlled business, drew on this source for office accommodation and funds, and accepted corporate membership subscriptions.

Nzimande’s interpretation needs to be understood from the perspective of those BPP’s who espoused a working class ideology and perceived the BMF as having compromised itself. Further, many BPPs were conscious of their need to remain close to workers and to their communities, which were committed to the broader struggle for a democratic dispensation.<sup>84</sup> These BPPs were reluctant to be identified too closely with the white

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retain the contact.

<sup>82</sup> Nzimande, “Corporate Guerillas”, pp.331-336.

<sup>83</sup> PPA Executive Committee Meeting, 9/2/1988 at the Executive Hotel in Umlazi outside of Durban..

<sup>84</sup> Legg, “Sources of Stress” interviewed BPPs in 2000 who expressed similar sentiments.

establishment as epitomised by white business. To this end the PPA made no approaches for funding, as did the BMF. Nzimande believed in the end the principle was compromised and led ultimately to the demise of the PPA in 1988. It is significant that the BMF only formally launched a branch in Durban in 1987 and the BMF President addressed a PPA meeting in Durban for the first time in August 1987.<sup>85</sup>

The demise of the PPA brought to an end a history of attempts by BPPs to establish their own organisation. The end to these efforts coincided with other broader political developments in South Africa where the collapse of apartheid could be foreseen and exploratory meetings began to be held outside of South Africa by key future players to explore ways to end apartheid. These changes were linked to 'toenadering'<sup>86</sup> efforts between those BPPs who had resisted being associated with the IPM and those within the IPM who understood transformation was essential for the future of South Africa and in the interests of forwarding the professionalising process.

### **The Institute of Personnel Management and the New South Africa**

The IPM's commitment to bringing BPPs into its decision making structures extended to the to the selection and future election of a black President. The traditional process for selection of presidential candidates had been for those with leadership qualities, who had served the organisation, understood its workings and been appointed to the Executive Committee, to be identified and prepared for a demanding year in the prestigious position as President. The Executive Committee believed that the best black candidate to be J B Magwaza. He had considerable HRM experience, was a senior executive of the Tongaat-Hulett Group based in KwaZulu Natal, and had been a leading personality in the PMA.

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<sup>85</sup> Black Leader, 7 (August 1987) and 8 (December 1987).

<sup>86</sup> "Toenadering" is a particularly apt Afrikaans expression to describe tentative moves between parties seeking to find accommodation on fundamental issues.

When approached he first cleared acceptance with his constituency. It was decided that he should be introduced through the IPM structures. The Natal Coastal Branch was asked in 1989 to co-opt him onto their committee, as it would be easier then to co-opt him onto the Executive Committee.<sup>87</sup> In 1990 Magwaza and Martin Sebesho were asked to serve on an expanded Executive Committee. Sebesho had been a 'founding father' of the BMF, its president in 1981-1982, and had considerable experience in senior HRM positions. In 1991 Magwaza raised the issue of affirmative action in the Central Office.<sup>88</sup> In 1993, he was appointed Vice-President to Ivan Latti, the President, while Lot Ndlovu and Dawn Mokhobo, two senior HR practitioners, were invited onto the Executive Committee at the same time.<sup>89</sup> In the same year the IPM accepted an invitation from the ANC to assist various of their working groups to define and clarify HR concepts.<sup>90</sup> This initiative arose from regular, but quiet, contact between the Director and the BMF over a period of time.

Late in 1990 the Executive Committee decided that the Strategic Plan launched in 1987 needed to be reformulated to meet the demands of a different environment emerging in South Africa. The new HR strategy had high ambitions in keeping with the hopeful mood of the time which is expressed in its objective that it "will assist South Africa to become a leading player in the international business community during the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century."<sup>91</sup> The 192 page HR 2000 document which took over a year to compile offered an analysis of both the world business climate and the parlous state of developing countries. Applying a systems approach, the study identified the inter-relatedness of HR systems and

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<sup>87</sup> IPM Executive committee minutes, 22/8/1989.

<sup>88</sup> IPM Executive committee minutes, 19/3/1991.

<sup>89</sup> IPM Executive committee minutes, 3/2/1993.

<sup>90</sup> IPM Executive committee minutes, 1/4/1993.

<sup>91</sup> IPM document, "HR 2000: A National Human Resources Strategy by the IPM." 1992 Document in IPM files.

all other systems in the environment in which it operated. It provided a vision of the future and outlined objectives to be attained. Modelled on the concept of a sound business plan, the scenario took into account the impact of a new South Africa on HRM. It recognised the critical stage being faced in the country's history if it did not make the transition from an apartheid to a post-apartheid democratic society. The strategy suggested a way forward.

The 'mission' of "HR 2000" as presented in the document was "to support, enhance and facilitate:

- \* Economic growth;
- \* A political dispensation that moved towards and strengthened democracy and human rights;
- \* The elimination of social backlogs in housing, health and education;
- \* The development, utilisation and application of the latest appropriate technology.<sup>92</sup>

The document is significant in two ways. The IPM is seen to have placed itself in line with a dynamic reconstruction of South Africa and believed that HR practitioners had an important role to play in assisting these developments to take place. It was the first time the IPM had attempted such a comprehensive analytical and strategic vision-based project. Couched in business jargon, the document attempted to relate the IPM to a different South Africa which began to emerge with the freeing of political prisoners, unbanning of political organisations and negotiations on the structure of the future. The IPM and its members were willing to assist in creating a new South Africa through a proposed strategy that "will assist South Africa to become a leading player in the international business community during the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century." The vision portrayed in the new strategy saw the IPM attempting to relate to a yet undiscovered new world of hope in a manner not previously undertaken.

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<sup>92</sup> "HR 2000", p.10.

The “HR 2000” strategy was released at the Annual Convention in October 1992 under the convention theme of “South Africa in Transition: Making Human Capital Work.” Prior to release it had been presented to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Manpower and Education Affairs. Thereafter presentations took place in companies, at IPM branches and employer bodies nationally in a public relations exercise to spread its message.

The launch of the “HR 2000” strategy gave new impetus to the IPM’s commitment to numerous social responsibility projects. The September 1993 edition of *People Dynamics* included a pullout insert entitled “Building the New South Africa” which provided a guide to the multi-party negotiating process, copies of which were available for distribution as part of the promotion drive.

At the end of 1993 JB Magwaza became the first black President of the IPM. Following his earlier initiative when he joined the Executive Committee, he now moved swiftly to have the Executive Committee create a task force to further affirmative action (AA).<sup>93</sup> A document was prepared outlining the IPM’s internal and external affirmative action goals. Internally, no new white appointments would be made in the central office without board approval and a target of 50% of Executive Board members would need to be black. The IPM committed itself to becoming an organisation where “black persons felt at home.” Each branch was asked to begin implementing AA in their own committees. The KZN Coastal Branch, for example, by mid 1994 reported: black male - three: Asian female - one: Asian male - one: white female- seven: white male - two. The President then sent each IPM member a nine-page document outlining the IPM’s affirmative action stance, its thinking and targets.<sup>94</sup> In 1994 the IPM supported the need for AA legislation, which was not well received by some long standing members, who believed it would become legislated reverse

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<sup>93</sup> IPM Executive committee minutes, 7/12/1993.

<sup>94</sup> IPM’s Position Statement on Affirmative Action, 20/5/1994.

discrimination.<sup>95</sup> Noting the negative reaction to legislating AA, the Board arranged for a presentation pack to be developed to assist branches to facilitate debate through workshops and forums.<sup>96</sup>

The IPM leadership supported ongoing social investment programmes as it believed them to be “inextricably linked to the role of HRPs in the peace process and in transition.”<sup>97</sup> This commitment linked the IPM’s public support for the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) to its contribution to the transformation process. In August 1994 the IPM circulated to members a document outlining the RDP, its rationale, areas for attention and why HRPs should participate in furthering its aims.<sup>98</sup> Fundamental to the RDP is the development of human resources. The IPM appealed to its members to actively further the goals of the RDP on the grounds that the RDP had everything to do with HR management. “The IPM therefore urges you as HR professionals to become actively involved in the RDP as a matter of urgency.” The use of the term “professional” implies that the IPM believed HRPs were professionals and that it was appropriate to call on them as “professionals” to participate in a socio-economic-political programme. The RDP had five basic programmes, one of which was, “Developing Human Resources”, which was the part of the programme to which HRPs could most meaningfully contribute.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Business Day. “IPM Advocates Legislation to Back Affirmative Action” 20/4/1994. See also, IPM Exco minutes, 26/5/1994.

<sup>96</sup> IPM Executive committee minutes, 13/6/1994.

<sup>97</sup> IPM Executive committee minutes, 7/12/1993.

<sup>98</sup> “The IPM in Support of the RDP: Harnessing People Power.” August 1994.

<sup>99</sup> Andrew Levy and Associates ran seminars throughout the country in 1994 for HRPs which encouraged them to focus on the area where their professional skills could be most effectively applied, rather than in disciplines where they had little applied skill. See “The Reconstruction and Development Programme” Technisem, Andrew Levy and Assoc, October 1994. 24 page seminar booklet. This programme was a far more thorough presentation and discussion of the issues involved in the RDP than the IPM was able to present.



The IPM's support for "free and fair elections." in the first fully democratic electoral process in South Africa, included encouraging IPM branches to become involved with local peace initiatives, advising companies on assisting in voter education and other activities such as helping employees obtain identity documents to register as voters.

After the successful 1994 national election, the Annual Convention in September 1994 became a watershed event with its first black president. J B Magwaza, the one time IPM dissident, presided under the convention theme - "Forward IPM, Phambili, Be Relevant". Reviewing the events of 1994, Magwaza believed it to have been "a miracle year" with peaceful elections and transition to a new government of national unity.<sup>100</sup> He stated that affirmative action and support for the RDP would continue high on the IPM agenda.

In 1995 the IPM continued a values transformation process based on its affirmative action policy guidelines. Led by Magwaza, the IPM decided to create an opportunity at the Annual Convention in September for a time of remembering, reflection and reconciliation, where a healing of relationships could occur in a public and formal manner. The event included identifying and acknowledging past discrimination within the IPM through the showing of a video where different black HRPs and members told of past discrimination and anger at the way they were treated, both by the IPM and within their own companies. In response Tony Frost, past-president 1991-1992, made a formal apology on behalf of white members.

For all of us, this moment of truth should be a watershed. Let us not allow it to build resentment and pain, but rather to create trust and unity. We have so much to gain by working together and so much to lose by not finding each other... mistakes of the past work directly against that... and I believe that our black colleagues deserve the acknowledgement that we recognise these mistakes and that we seek now ... to work

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<sup>100</sup> J B Magwaza, "A Time to Consolidate," People Dynamics, 12, 12 (November/December 1994), p.7.

together as a profession. We sincerely regret the mistakes of the past.<sup>101</sup>

Commenting on why he had agreed to provide a formal apology, Frost stated, “I believed in it. It was an acknowledgement that whites had done wrong in the past. It was a public acknowledgement. It was an emotionally charged event. The auditorium was hushed. People were crying.”<sup>102</sup>

J B Magwaza acknowledged the apology and, in accepting it, called on members to go forward together now to meet the new challenges. The whole convention event was captured on video and a document, entitled “If the Truth be told” was produced. The video and document was presented to special meetings of IPM members around the country organised by the branches early in 1996.<sup>103</sup> These events gave IPM members the opportunity to share in the process of reconciliation initiated at the 1995 Convention and to enable those not present at the Convention to share in the process of healing.

Not all white members felt the need to apologise for the silence of the IPM and its failure to protest or take action over issues of racial discrimination and injustice in the past. The IPM event took place ahead of the launch of the national Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and no other professional body has been identified which initiated a similar process of re- building relationships ahead of the IPM initiative. Magwaza summarised the process as follows:

As those entrusted with human values in organisations, it is clearly for us, the human resources profession, to accept responsibility to nurture and protect humanness which

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<sup>101</sup> IPM Membership Brief, “If Truth be Told...past reflections and future visions.” IPM Values Transformation Process. (January 1996), p.5.

<sup>102</sup> Tony Frost, interview with the researcher, 10/9/2003.

<sup>103</sup> IPM, “If Truth be Told...” 1996.

binds us as a people.<sup>104</sup>

The reconciliation process fittingly took place in the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the IPM. Nothing of a similar nature had occurred elsewhere in the world of human resource practitioners. The significance in terms of the process of professionalisation is unprecedented.

The IPM now needed to move forward to fulfill its mandate as directed by its constitution. At this time it was reported to be “the largest HR association in Africa and one of the ten biggest in the world.”<sup>105</sup> By the end of 1995 it had become a significant institute with 7322 individual members and 772 corporate members. Financially, it had grown steadily with the income for the year at over R9.5 million and expenditure over R9.3 million. Its income generation came from: Diploma: 24.8%; Annual Convention: 22.8%; Training programmes 18.9%; Members fees 14.6%; *People Dynamics* (Journal) 9%. By the end of 1995, the IPM had ambitiously purchased its own building in Parktown for R2.7 million with R500 000 allocated for refurbishing and a loan for R2.4 million having been obtained to finance the project.

Having reached this dynamic stage in the history of the IPM and the new socio-economic commitments expected of HRPs, the issue of the formal professional status of HR practitioners remained unresolved amidst the demands of a new democratic South Africa.

While the IPM was leading HRPs in the process of transformation in South Africa, the SABPP was quietly progressing with its task of laying foundations for formal recognition of HR practitioners. For example, the result of this activity reached fulfilment in 2000 when the SABPP was granted official status as the Education and Training Quality

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<sup>104</sup> IPM, “If Truth be Told....” p.6.

<sup>105</sup> IPM Executive committee minutes, 1/4/1993.

Assurer (ETQA) for HR practice in South Africa. This recognition allowed the SABPP to formally accredit HRM training in South Africa.

### **Concluding Comments on the Period : 1984 - 1995**

The events of the period 1984-1995 are observed to have had considerable impact on both the IPM, the SABPP, black practitioners and the practice of human resource management (HRM)

Trends in HRM continued to be influenced by overseas thinking and experts, who regularly visited and advised on updating HR practice, despite international attempts to isolate South Africa. HRPs were found to be leading the way in introducing more participative styles of management in very demanding circumstances. In addition, the unique South African situation meant that employers were called on to give support to a wide range of community upliftment programmes. HRPs usually led these initiatives. Whether this involvement in the affairs of disadvantaged communities may be perceived as part of their 'professional' work has to be evaluated. The assistance given did improve the lives of many of the company's employees and their communities and served as a useful public relations exercise.

The IPM's earlier hesitant criticism of government action, on the grounds that political involvement did not fall within its role, became transformed to enthusiastic endorsement of the new government's social development programmes and, especially, its RDP initiative.

The SABPP suffered a further setback with the government's refusal for a second time, to proceed with legislation to support registration. But the SABPP emerged as making a positive contribution to the professionalisation process by commencing with evaluating

and accrediting tertiary institutions who trained HRPs. The confusion between the roles of the IPM and the SABPP probably will not be reduced whilst the issue of statutory registration remains unresolved. One easy test of professional status is for HRPs to be legally registered. By the end of the period the SABPP and potential professionals had to be content with voluntary registration, which did not carry the significance of statutory registration for professional recognition. The whole issue of professional standards became complicated by the process of finding a formula for the inclusion as 'practitioners' of previously disadvantaged BPPs, who lacked the academic qualifications, but who could claim adequate practical experience.

The process of professionalisation became complicated further by a black lobby who did not wish to be seen as co-operating with the IPM and the SABPP, as these associations had not been experienced as working in the interests of BPPs. The process slowed down under pressure from wider ideological and political agendas. The distancing was removed once the movement towards a 'new South Africa' had become irrevocable.

The 1980s in South Africa saw new emphases emerging where the concept of "human resource management" began replacing traditional "personnel management" as the current orthodoxy. The replacement of the term 'personnel' with 'human resources' became symptomatic of a change that had occurred slowly and quietly. A closer identification of HRM practice with corporate goals had begun to take place in the 1980s and by the 1990s the concept of "strategic human resource management" (SHRM) had emerged to dominate thinking within HRM circles. HRM had become integral to all key management decisions and no longer existed on the periphery of organisational decision making. The integration of HRM goals with corporate goals became required practice in keeping with global trends.

The process of change in South Africa had been hastened by the events of the period

which forced HRPs to the forefront of company involvement. It can be argued that this change in emphasis impacted on the interpretation of the meaning of professionalisation. The HRP now is perceived to be a key player in an organisation. Much more is expected from such person which requires greater leadership skills, broader knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge to obtain results that affect the bottom line of the company. It is this person who emerges from this period who is most likely to be recognised as a “professional human resource practitioner.” However, the criteria to be used to measure whether such HRP may be classified as a ‘professional’ remains elusive.



## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The study investigated the development of human resource management (HRM) in South Africa from 1945 - 1995. The exploring and recording of that development provides the essential context for a study and analysis of the process of the professionalisation of the occupation of human resource practitioners (HRP). Without an adequate history of HRM an attempt at understanding the process of professionalisation could not be achieved. This concluding chapter will draw out the more significant events in the history of the development of HRM in South Africa and relate them to professionalisation, present findings, drew some conclusions and suggest areas requiring further research. The study relied on minutes, journal articles, research papers, theses, interviews and then texts when it came to providing background information on HRM and the general history of South Africa. No similar substantial study in South Africa could be located. The closest being recent research by Chantal van der Westhuizen and others studying current perceptions of professionalism among HRPs.<sup>1</sup>

The term “personnel” is used for the period of its common parlance up to 1980. Thereafter “human resources” is used as the preferred conceptual term applied to HRM. Personnel/human resource management is used throughout the study in relation to the “employment relationship” within organisations, to avoid confusion with the popular use of the term ‘human resources’ within South Africa where it becomes a catchall for much wider intentions beyond the scope of HRM.

The terms ‘human resource management’ (HRM) and ‘human resource practice’ have

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<sup>1</sup> Chantal van der Westhuizen, L J van Vuuren and Dalene Visser, “Human Resource Management as a Profession in South Africa: Practitioners Perspectives.” Johannesburg: Department of Human Resource Management, Rand Afrikaans University. 2003.

specific meaning. HRM is a body of knowledge that may be taught, captured in text books and its concepts debated in journals so that aspiring HRPs may be educated in its detail. Human resource practice, as used in this study, is the application of this knowledge and requires a range of skills for implementation. The study reveals that the process of professionalisation is about both acquiring the necessary knowledge and about improving its application in practice. It is the HRP who applies the knowledge through discernment, experience, skill in working with people, often with organisational political adroitness and who, in this study, is observed striving to achieve professional recognition. The reasons why HRPs aspire to this elevated status is not covered, as the matter of motivation belongs more appropriately in the field of social science research.

The Armstrong and other models used in analysing the history of HRM were provided (Chapter One) as useful examples of the development of HRM in USA and Great Britain. These models have the added benefit of providing background information on HRM, introducing HRM terminology, showing its historical streams and the schools of thought that influenced HRM. The Armstrong model illustrates these trends and his diagrammatic presentation is a useful means of unravelling complex strains in HRM history. (Appendix 1.1)

“Professionalisation” is used in the study to describe a dynamic, ongoing process that can be observed in action over time. The terms “professional” and “professionalism” suffer from the same weakness, as ‘human resources’, through popular usage where there is a failure to define adequately who is a ‘professional’ and how one becomes a ‘professional’. The various models of professionalisation referred to from the literature in Chapter One were investigated to assist in obtaining insight into the process that might be anticipated when attempting to observe the development of professionalisation in personnel/human resource management. The Wilensky, Millerson, Freidson, Elliott and J Louw (South Africa) models were reviewed, with Wilensky’s evidence based five stage model emerging

as the most practical, despite criticism from scholars such as J Louw.

A complicating factor in the study is the recognition that HRPs are not the only ones who apply HRM principles and practices. Langenhoven, a prominent personnel researcher in South Africa from the 1970s, identified this feature early in his research, when he recognised that line managers also undertake the application of aspects of HRM. The application of HRM is therefore, not the sole preserve of HRPs. Selection and placement of employees, industrial relations matters such as discipline and grievance handling and other HR administrative tasks, in some companies are dealt with by line managers or foremen. Before the advent of the personnel function, line managers undertook these functions as part of their responsibilities, which later were removed from their control and then in more recent times began to be returned to them.

The earliest signs of HRPs articulating an awareness of the need to strive for professional status appear in the mid-1940s. Led by the pioneering enthusiasm of Isobel White, the first moves towards professionalising personnel practice commenced and this early interest tracks the developments in the growth of personnel management in South Africa. In the Wilensky model the first three stages come close together in the first few years of attempts at professionalising personnel practice. Thereafter, the process becomes attenuated over a long period of time. It was no different in South Africa.

During the 1930s the move away from welfare officers in South Africa had begun and by the early 1940s personnel managers had been introduced into the larger companies which had recognised the need for these senior appointments to deal more adequately with the new emphasis on the human aspects of work. This process was hastened by the demands of the war years from 1939-1945. The background to these developments followed trends in Great Britain and the USA, where full-time personnel functionaries had been employed for many years, as may be observed from the Rowntree organisation chart (Appendix 2.1).

No numbers of personnel managers and personnel officers could be located, nor in which companies they were first appointed in South Africa, but clearly, the first stage of the emergence of a full time occupation had occurred.

The introduction of a post-graduate diploma course in “welfare and personnel management” at Rhodes University College in 1944 heralds the next stage in professionalisation. Rhodes became the first institution to offer specialised post-graduate training in personnel management and in so doing launched a new era in the education of aspiring personnel managers. Isobel White’s initiative arose from her own experience in Great Britain and her perception that the time had arrived in South Africa to follow overseas practice. Undergraduate courses in industrial psychology and social work subjects were offered from the early 1940s by, for example, the University of Stellenbosch, as academic training for candidates for personnel work. White’s proposal called for a more specialised comprehensive package that had the advantage and credibility of being constructed on a model approved by the British IPM. Other universities followed and by the early 1970s the IPM launched its own distance learning diploma course to meet the needs of students who lacked access to tertiary institutions and for blacks who were not permitted to attend traditional white institutions.

Although the establishment of tertiary training marks an important stage in the process towards professionalisation, an essential part of professionalism is the updating of that education and maintaining its quality and relevance to sustain the profession. Tertiary institutions have their own internal mechanisms for keeping up to date with trends and needs in tuition for prospective HRPs and of providing ongoing education for their occupation. A weakness in the provision of education and training in HRM and other related specialist fields, lay in the lack of an external means of assessing the quality and relevance of the courses available in a free market economy, where institutions compete for students. The existence of a programme is no guarantee of its quality to qualify

potential professionals. It is this problem that the SABPP set about solving considerably later in the process of professionalisation. The SABPP, by invitation, commenced evaluating and accrediting HRM programmes at educational institutions to ensure quality standards in teaching HRM, something not done since the introduction of the first diploma at Rhodes, with its approval by the British IPM

The launch of the first branch of the IPM in Port Elizabeth in 1945, initially as an affiliate of the British IPM, led to branches being started in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. These branches formed the foundation of a national institute that finally emerged in 1963 and thereafter steadily grew in membership and broadened its services to members. The establishment of the IPM as a professional association provides another stage in the professionalising process. The purpose of such association is to nurture, control and service the needs of the occupation's members. The IPM's services were provided mainly through the annual conventions, the journal, regular branch meetings, the opportunity for networking and later, the Diploma. The growth in attendance at national conventions from 1970 and exposure at these conventions of members to leading South African and international speakers became an important way of keeping practitioners in touch with latest trends. The IPM journal (which periodically changed its name and format for relevance and marketing purposes) played an equally important role in updating members on current issues. Analyses of monthly themes and articles reveal the wide spread of issues presented which contributed to the debate on important HRM issues.

The appointment by the IPM of Dave Jackson as a full-time National Director in late 1969 gave drive and focus to the activities of the IPM, allowing it to develop its role as a 'professional' institute and to have a much higher profile. The activities mentioned in the study and other programmes, such as provision of short courses, allowed the IPM to fulfil its mandate as a provider of guidance and service to members in keeping with the purpose

of a professional association.

The creation by the IPM of the SABPP as an independent agent to further the drive towards a regulated professional status became a key move in striving for professional recognition. Twice the IPM tried to obtain statutory registration, once in the name of the IPM and the second time in the name of the newly created SABPP. The first application in 1976 was turned down and the later 1984 application was rejected in 1986. On both occasions no adequate explanation was received from the authorities for the rejection. The IPM/SABPP had undertaken lobbying and detailed explanations to the relevant authorities and employer bodies, presenting the grounds of its readiness for legislated control of the profession. The lobbying was without success. The most direct explanation for rejection is anecdotal from Sutton who believed the minister had blocked the application on the basis of the IPM's non-racial membership, but it could have been shown that there were other professional bodies which were non-racial. The stage in the process of professionalisation which entailed political activity leading to obtaining the support of law for a new profession remained unsuccessful. It came as a setback for those, like Garry Whyte, who had consistently worked to achieve legal recognition as a fundamental requirement for the formal recognition of the professional status of HRPs. In response the SABPP proceeded with registration of 'practitioners' and 'technicians' on a non-statutory basis, which it had already begun earlier in anticipation of approval.

Both the IPM and the SABPP produced codes of ethical behaviour. But these codes suffered from being unenforceable. They each set guidelines for conduct. Those registered with the the SABPP agreed to abide by its code as part of registration. In reality both codes appear toothless. Any disciplinary process that may be commenced against a HRP for professional misdemeanour is of minimal value as there is no power to debar a delinquent from practising. In the Wilensky model the introduction of a code of ethics represented the beginning of the push for formal professional status. It is in this



final stage where power can be exerted on professionals to work in terms of their code or face disciplinary action. Such codes exist to protect the interests of the profession and give assurance to the clients of the professional service, that integrity and quality of service will be delivered. Without an enforceable code, a profession can not be adequately policed, the required standards of performance can not be guaranteed and clients have no assurance they are getting value for money. For an occupation to claim professional status without statutory support, leaves it vulnerable to the weakness of self regulatory discipline.

If statutory recognition is the final test of professional status, then South African HRM would not qualify as a profession as that stage of formal recognition was not achieved within the period of the study. However, other observations of the professionalising process may be drawn from the research which are of relevance. These observations, related to the professionalisation of HR practice, do not fall directly within the recognisable stages but play a significant part in the process of a uniquely South African context.

An element in the growth of an emerging profession is the anxiety which the parent body begins to feel when the developing occupation threatens to breakaway on its own. This may occur where the new occupation believes they have outgrown the confines of the nurturer and seeks independence. A tension arose within the industrial psychology community when HRM moved to stake out its independence as a discipline in its own right. Concern emerged in the psychology fraternity that it would lose one of its major stakeholders. This distress is illustrative of a “boundary contest” which Wilensky and others refer to as an emerging, youthful “profession” moves towards independence. HRM had been nurtured by industrial psychology and then appeared reluctant to allow HR practice to establish itself in its own right. As companies began to employ ever larger numbers of HRPs it became a ‘no contest’ and HRM flew the nest to make its own claims

to being a new profession.

A further feature of the early years of the study period is the contribution made by personnel research agencies. That research and the accompanying methods of application in practice became an important contribution to the growth of professionalism. Its role is similar to that of medical research which feeds through to medical practitioners in terms of improved diagnosis and treatment. The introduction of personnel research, first at the Leather Industries Research Institute (LIRI) led by Isobel White and then at the National Institute of Personnel Research (NIPR) under Simon Biesheuvel, show that South African research was equal to similar work undertaken overseas.

White's description of the LIRI contribution to industry, as presented in her book in 1946, falls within the category of pioneering work. Biesheuvel's extensive personnel research programmes from the mid 1940s at the NIPR, using a large team of researchers, led to innovative selection testing schemes applied widely in mines and industry at a time when there was great demand for this kind of assistance. The research in regard to African workers, questioned in some circles, provided selection and training methods ahead of anything elsewhere in Africa. Biesheuvel's overall contribution became acknowledged at international level. Selection testing became an important contribution of personnel practice at the time as industry and mining sought better African recruits to achieve greater productivity. The Langenhoven led personnel surveys and statistical evaluation at University of the Orange Free State, also provided important insights into the directions in personnel work, as did later similar research at the Human Sciences Research Council in Pretoria.

HRM by its nature needs to be provided with the findings of research to enable it to meet the constantly shifting demands for the better utilisation of organisational human resources and to fulfil its mandate as a professional service. Without South African grounded

research, HRM would become less effective in providing improved ways of dealing with specifically South African employment related problems.

From the mid 1970s considerable demands were placed on HRPs to lead their companies through the onslaught from militant black trade union pressure. South Africa rapidly developed its own specialists to train HRPs to meet the challenges in industrial relations, in management development and training in a wide range of work skills. For example, Universities, such as UNISA, developed a labour unit where hundreds of black and white HRPs were trained in labour law and industrial relations skills. The University of Port Elizabeth's Volkswagen sponsored Labour unit under Professor Roux van der Merwe, also earned a respected reputation for developing insight and skills in handling labour issues. Consultants in industrial relations multiplied. Some, like Andrew Levy and Associates, gained a reputation for highly professional training and advice. A high level of industrial relations skills emerged over a ten year period where HRPs were able to provide very professional guidance to their companies. At the same time management development became a focus with international consultants making considerable input in improving management skills through the appropriate interventions of HRPs. In both management development and industrial relations HRPs were at the forefront providing professional guidance. In this process the IPM played an important part in offering leadership and the use of its resources and facilities for training. As HRPs responded to the unique challenges, many individuals grew in stature and acceptance by their companies, partly explained by their ability to make the conceptual and practical shift to playing a role at the core of the business. This development may be interpreted as part of the professionalising process of HRPs in South Africa.

The easier years of personnel practice for HRPs came to an end in the early 1970s with growing political resistance within and outside South Africa which called for very different approaches in dealing with the changed conditions in the country. For example,

pressure on multi-national companies to withdraw from South Africa led to a strategy, through the implementation of “Codes”, to enable companies to remain invested, but in so doing to contribute to in-company labour changes. The Codes required the acceptance of black trade unions, affirmative action, systematic removal of apartheid in the work place and other changes. HRPs took the lead in implementing code requirements and the annual reporting on progress. Although the codes were not their initiative, it did result in HRPs contributing their skill in introducing a non-racial work environment, not welcomed by conservative white managers and employees.

Under pressure from big business, government conceded to review labour legislation, established the Wiehahn Commission and agreed in the end to major changes in labour law. HRPs now were required to deal with a very different employment environment which called for the rapid acquiring of new professional skills already referred to. By the mid 1980s resistance to the apartheid government gained sufficient momentum for business to recognise the futility of neutrality and begin to seek some form of negotiated settlement which would avoid a wasteland economy and led to a non-racial government. One of the spinoffs of this acceptance is the increase by companies of their corporate social responsibility spending to show their commitment to black upliftment, later referred to as corporate social investment (CSI), suggesting a more subtle shift to convey corporate concern for the well being of the communities in which they operate. CSI is not unique to South Africa, but the timing of greater attention to its value is significant. In most companies HRPs took charge of company CSI projects. The 1990s finally brought a new democratic South Africa with companies facing greater demands to meet new equity requirements in their management and workforce. Again, HRPs took the lead in the new developments which called for professional expertise.

From the 1970s HRPs dealt with these many unique work place problems, which called for them to provide guidance to their organisations and solve their human resource

problems. To meet the challenge the numbers of HRPs grew, especially of BPPs. Training and updating in HR skills and knowledge became a growth industry, already referred to. Much sharing of experience took place through 'professional' networking as HRPs sought solutions to the difficulties in their own organisations. Urgent efforts were made by the IPM to retain affiliation with international HR organisations as a means of maintaining the flow of knowledge and skill. The unique South African conditions produced a breed of HRPs who responded in creative ways to meet the challenges in their own companies, as seen for example, in P G Bison. A breed of innovative HRPs emerged who generated new ways of problem solving and thereby provided models for others to follow. Although formal professionalisation may not have been achieved during the period, the activity of many HRPs displayed leadership in the application of HR principles. It is a story which has not been adequately recorded and may be said to add to the level of professionalism achieved in South Africa.

The race issue is a uniquely South African feature which may be seen to have had an influence on the process of professionalisation. Race discrimination in the work environment and a sense of neglect by the IPM of the concerns of BPPs, led them to form their own association, first as NEPTDASA and then subsequent the PMA/PPA. Although its signed up membership never appeared large and generally seemed to be regionally based, it represented an outspoken element who wished to work for a better dispensation for BPPs. Their existence is testimony to a weakness in the IPM which was unable at the time to provide a home for dissident BPPs. Significantly, their existence caused sufficient concern for the IPM to engage the dissidents in discussions and negotiations. Of equal note is the number of their leaders, such as J B Magwaza, who went on to become senior company executives.

The dilemma for many BPPs is that power lay with the IPM/SABPP in regard to possible professional registration which many BPPs sought. Also, in company matters, their

future could be determined by their white superiors on whose goodwill they depended to further their careers through promotion and whom they were reluctant to alienate by too obvious a voicing of grievances. For some BPPs seeking formal recognition as professionals, entailed a compromise to achieve the desired status.

J B Magwaza is seen as an important pioneering contributor in the striving for a better opportunity for BPPs and illustrates a particularly South African element in the process of professionalisation. Magwaza's involvement from the launch of the first black alternative association to the IPM was continued through a principled stance in maintaining distance from the IPM. The changing socio-political balance in South Africa led him to accept the offer to become the IPM's first black president. From within the IPM hierarchy he speeded up creation of conditions for affirmative action. First within the National office, then the IPM branch committees and next by calling on IPM members to play a leading part in furthering affirmative action within their own companies. His contribution culminates with the reconciliation ceremony at the 1995 Annual Convention which sought formal closure to the enmity felt by BPPs towards the IPM and the perceived discriminatory practice against BPPs down the years.

The reconciliation ceremony at the 1995 convention illustrates another unusual South African feature in the process of professionalisation. The South African experience suggests that professional status contains additional factors, other than the normal stages, and which required attention prior to a claim of professional status having been achieved. It may be argued that after 1995 the record had in principle been set right to enable further progress to be made in striving for professional status.

The endeavour to bring closure to the tension within the IPM between those who felt wronged and those who were part of the system, contains two significant elements. The first, the initiative came from those who felt aggrieved. The second, the process of



reconciliation did not commence from an alleged contravention of either the IPM or the SABPP codes of professional conduct. A notable feature of the reconciliation is that it appropriately took place within the HRP fraternity, who claim to be the specialists in organisational human relationships or at least are expected to be. Although not a traditional test of a claim to professional status, the act of reconciliation illustrated human resource practice in action. in a special South African context. It may argued that had the formal process of reconciliation not been undertaken, the credibility of the claim for professional status could have been questioned.

The study noted that from around the 1990s, HRPs began to adopt a more overt role as HR specialists and ‘consultants’ on HR practice to line managers. Around this time an increasing number of HRPs are observed assuming a more strategic role within their organisations as HRM began to be conceptualised as strategic human resource management (SHRM). This development requires HRPs to acquire a much deeper grasp of the operation of the business, which in turn has to be included in the education and training provided to HRPs to enable them to play their new strategic role. The performance of HRPs is now measured on their contribution to bottom line results of the operation. These HRPs no longer exist on the periphery of the organisation, as in the earlier days when their welfare ministrations and later personnel administrative functions were dispensable and the value of their contribution to the organisation at times treated with scepticism. HRPs at the end of the study period in 1995 are expected to be key members of the management team by their companies, guiding them on how best to engage their human assets and deploy their human capital at optimum level. Any claim for professional status by HRPs now requires they be measured against these new performance criteria. This radical shift from welfare orientation to bottom line performance measurement illustrates the major shift in emphasis that needs to be taken into account when assessing claims for professional status.

The process of accreditation by the SABPP began in 1990 with an invitation from Rand

Afrikaans University to assess their HRM education and training. By 1994 the SABPP panel of experts had accredited 14 teaching institutions. At the end of 1995 the SABPP quality assurance programme still awaited formal recognition within government policy. The system of accreditation does not imply that unaccredited institutions are below standard, but that the SABPP procedure of evaluating, testing and accrediting programmes ensures the quality of the education at the accredited institutions. This quality assurance of HRM education is a milestone in the process of professionalisation for HRPs. Accredited institutions are reviewed on a three year cycle to ensure standards are being maintained. The SABPP's support for the introduction of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act passed in October 1995 and subsequently formed statutory bodies, such as the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), is further evidence of its commitment to quality assurance in HRM education and training. Although the requirement of quality assurance of education did not emerge in the texts on professionalisation as a condition for establishing professional status, the role of the SABPP meets a need to ensure that new graduates are properly equipped to meet the changing demands of the profession.

The study recorded developments in HRM in South Africa from 1945 to 1995 and related these to the process of professionalisation of HR practice. Following the Wilensky model, HRPs have not reached the stage where they may legitimately call themselves professionals. The non-statutory status of the SABPP has not provided the leverage that is required to enforce professional standards. The accrediting process is recognised as beginning a method of ensuring standards are maintained at tertiary institutions and holds long term benefits for the training of aspiring HRPs.

Despite not meeting Wilensky's five stage model, HR practice in South Africa is shown to have portrayed the knowledge and skills equal to the requirements of a professional. By the end of 1995 many HRPs had ceased to be concerned over the issue of seeking statutory

recognition to justify their claim to professional status. They referred to themselves as ‘professionals’, conducted themselves in a professional manner and believed that the debate was a non-issue. Another school of thought believed formal recognition was in the interests of the profession and continued to work towards obtaining statutory recognition. In 2003 the SABPP was formally granted ETQA status as the body to accredit training institutions for HRM. The SABPP continued to strive for statutory status for HRPs and during 2003 launched a concerted campaign to achieve this objective. During the early part of 2004 further activity continued with the anticipation that statutory recognition may be achieved at last.

The findings of this investigation suggest attention to a number of issues.

1. The IPM has been in existence since 1945 and a full history of its activities, contribution to HRM, weaknesses, depiction of leading personalities, evaluation of its successes and failings could provide a valuable record which could fill a gap in the history of the development of HRM in South Africa. The current project is too limited by its focus, to provide adequate coverage. Further research could lead to a formal history in the same manner in which the British IPM commissioned Niven to produce a history of their first fifty years and then later arranged for a more recent record to be written.
2. The earliest period of personnel activity in South Africa up to 1945 does not appear to have been researched. No research material related to this earlier period was found during the current research, suggesting an area worthy of research.
3. The lack of a committed archiving policy on the part of the IPM requiring proper preserving of official records would assist in inhibiting the destruction of documents. The study revealed a loss of documents at the IPM national office over a prolonged period which is a matter of concern. The loss of private papers of leading personalities specially

donated to the IPM by Isobel White and Val Mickelburgh illustrate the seriousness of the problem. Alternatively, a university could be approached to establish an HRM archive into which the IPM could deposit its existing historical material according to a dating policy. Then individuals who had made significant contributions to the IPM, or other high profile HRM players, could be encouraged to donate documents of historical value with the knowledge that they will be preserved for research purposes. The documents and tapes related to the 1995 reconciliation event, back copies of minutes of board, council and AGMs, policy documents and many other important papers of historical value then could be placed with confidence in such a repository.

4. Once the SABPP has achieved its current (2004) bid for legislated status of HR practice, it could become an opportunity to include such development in the ongoing story of the process of the professionalisation of HR practice in South Africa.

5. A history of the development of HRM education and training at South Africa's leading universities, technikons (as they were) and certain well established private organisations could provide an important addition to the understanding of their contribution to the development of HRM. The current research only touched this important service to the growth of the South Africa's economy.

The study revealed that the process of professionalisation of HRM in South Africa is unfinished from a classical model perspective such as presented by Wilensky. Formal statutory registration had not been achieved by 1995, although it was noted that in more recent years significant progress has been made in this respect. The process of professionalisation, it was observed, had been inhibited due to the racial-social-political divides within South Africa. By the end of the period under study, important steps were taken to rectify this legacy of division and distrust. The credibility of the emerging profession thus was enhanced as HRPs applied themselves to applying the principles of

HRM within the dynamics of the unique context in South Africa. The role of the SABPP in laying foundations for proper standards for the profession is observed to be fundamental in a situation where human resources is seen to be a diverse field where numerous non-professionals work.

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Professor W Backer,	26/8/2003
John Dickinson,	26/8/2003
Herb Humphreys,	31/3/1998, 8/5/1998
J B Magwaza,	15/4/1998.
Sipho Masondo,	23/4/1998, 28/8/2003.
Val Mickelburgh,	17/3/2003, 14/5/2003.
Hugo Misselhorn,	13/11/1998.
R V (Dick) Sutton,	13/9/1998, 14/3/2003, 12/5/2003.
Dawid Swart,	26/8/2003.
Tommy Vogel,	8/11/1998
Isobel White,	5/11/1999

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## APPENDICES



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Armstrong’s “Three Streams” of Historical Development  
of Human Resource Management

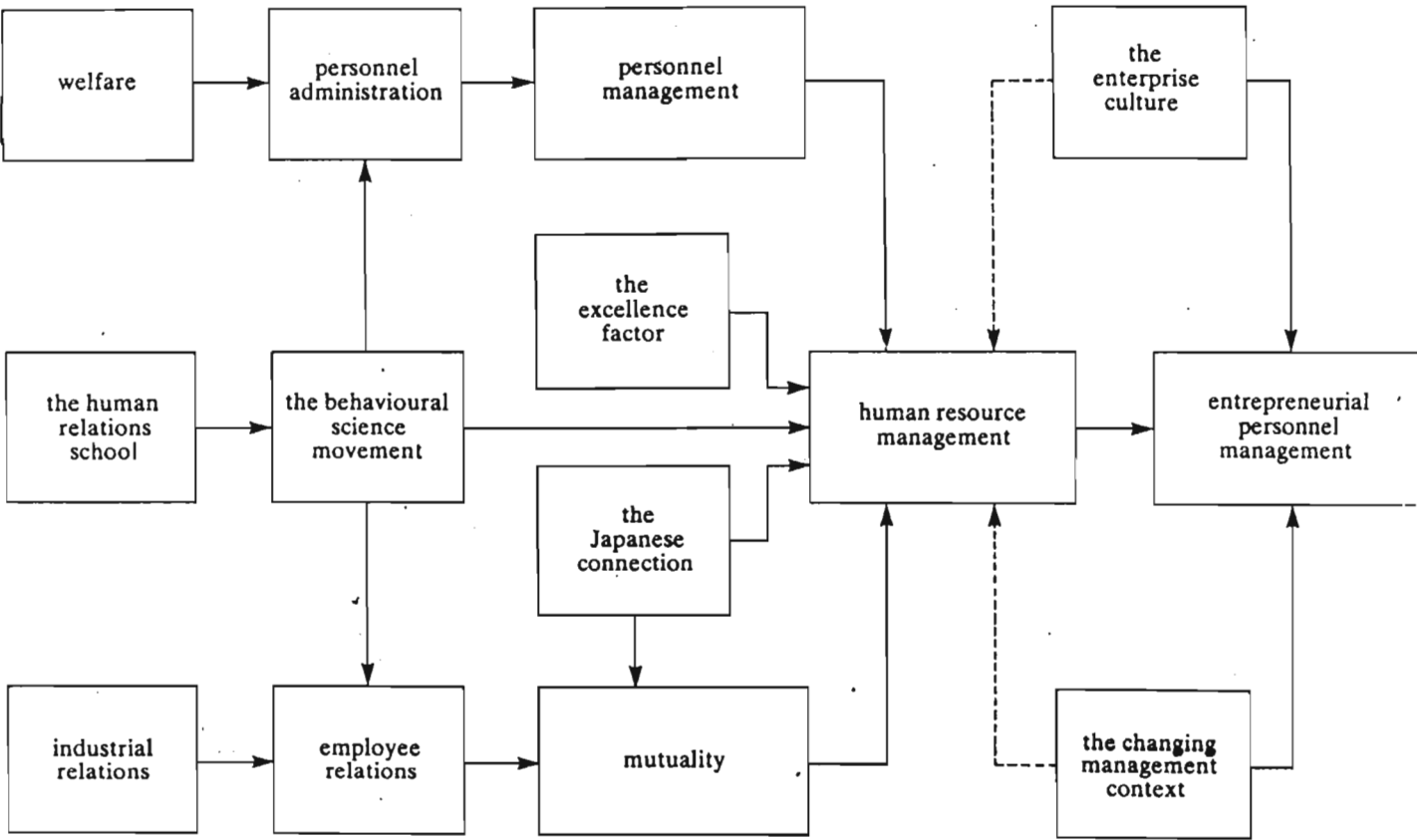


FIGURE 2. 1

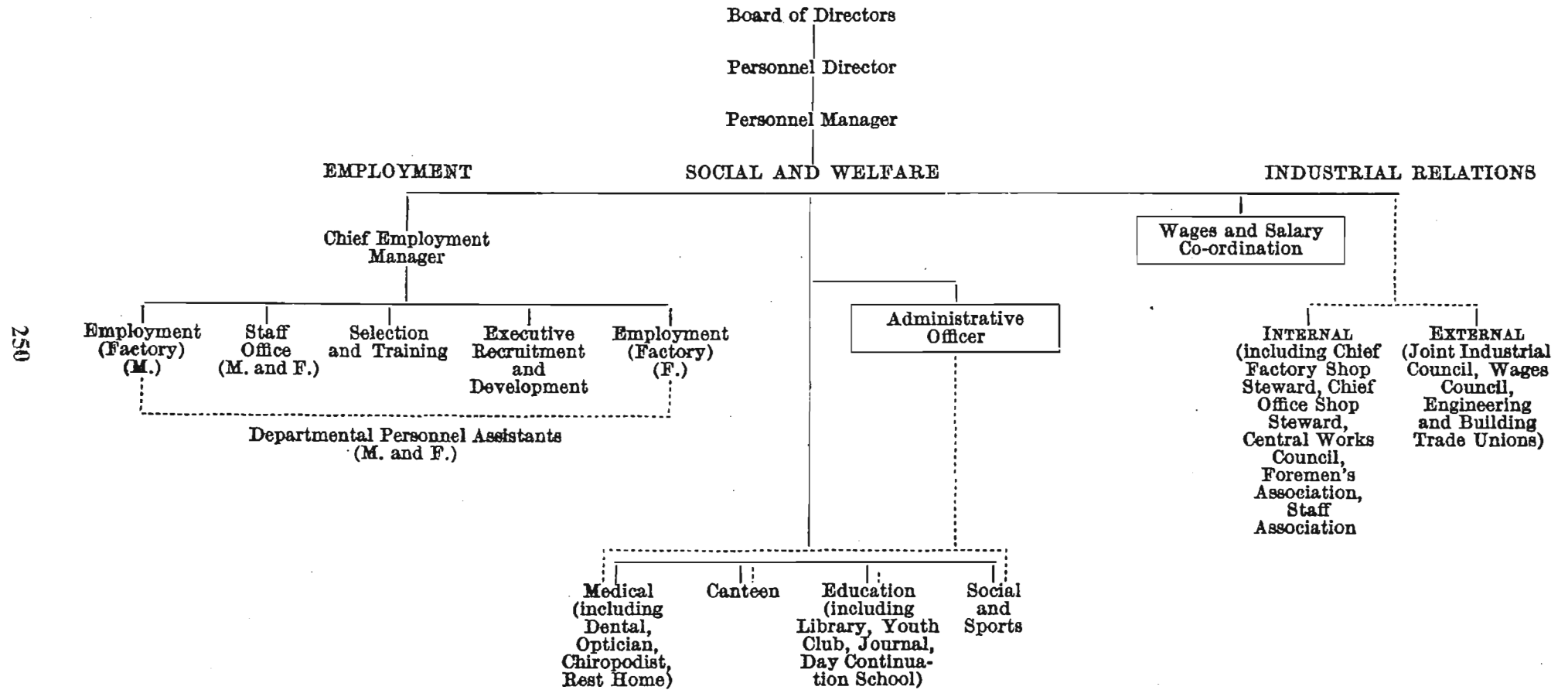


FIG. 1. PERSONNEL ORGANIZATION CHART—ROWNTREE AND COMPANY, YORK

Source: Northcott (1947)

## RHODES UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.

## SOCIAL SCIENCE COMMITTEE.

Meeting held at 4.15 p.m. on Friday, 3rd September, 1943.

- Present. 1. Prof. Wild (in the Chair), Mr. Krige, Mr. Franklin, Dr. Krige, Miss Fowler, Miss Stoker, Prof. Shuttleworth, Mrs. White.
2. The Committee recommends that:
- (a) the college institutes a course of training for Personnel Welfare and Management.
  - (b) Special Short course, 1944:
    - i) To fill immediate demands for such Personnel Managers, a special course over two terms be given in 1944, the successful candidate to be given a certificate (not a diploma) which might be converted to a diploma later, on evidence of successful work in industrial employment.
    - ii) Only a limited number of selected students be allowed to embark on this course, and they must be graduates.
    - iii) A notice to be put up inviting interested students who will have graduated by the end of this year, to interview Mrs. White in the first instance and subsequently the selection Committee referred to below.  
Note: This special course will be covered by existing lecture courses with the exception of special lectures and practical work to be given and arranged by Mrs. White.
  - (c) Full course:
    - i) An R.U.C. Diploma in Personnel Welfare and Management be instituted.
    - ii) Entrance qualification shall be B.A., B.A. (S.S.), B.Sc. B.Com.
    - iii) Only selected students be allowed to enter for the diploma, the selection being made by a Selection Committee consisting of Mrs. White, Prof. of Commerce, Professor of Psychology and a member of the Social Science staff.
    - iv) Recognition for the diploma be sought from the Institute of Labour Management, London.
    - v) The normal length of the course will be twelve months after graduation but the actual length of the course may be longer for some candidates, depending on how many of the subjects in the Diploma curriculum have been completed by the candidate in his degree course.
    - vi) The curriculum of each individual student to be considered by the Selection Committee with power to modify the curriculum to meet special difficulties. Students who have begun their degree course before 1944, may be given special exemptions to make it possible for them to complete the Diploma in twelve months.
    - vii) Curriculum: The Diploma will be awarded to candidates who have passed the following courses either for their degree or subsequently in the Diploma course:-  
University Degree courses:

1. Econ. & Econ. History. I	- full B.A. or B.Com degree/	course.
2. Economics II	- full " " "	" "
3. Psychology I	- " " B.Sc. " "	" "
4. Psychology II	- " " " " "	" "
- Courses covered by University degree courses.
5. Social Problems: full course - covered by parts of Sociology I and II.
  6. Social Law : full course, covered by parts of Social Work I and II.
  7. Indus. Organisation: Half course - half of Ind. Org. & Management given for B.Com.
  8. Elem. Statistics: half course, covered by Elem. Theory of Statistics & Finance B.Com.

(copy of original minutes)

**RHODES UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
SENATE MINUTE  
3 November 1943**

**DIPLOMA IN PERSONNEL WELFARE AND MANAGEMENT**

The following was approved:

- (a) a course of training for Personnel Welfare and Management.
- (b) Special Short Course: 1944
  - i) To fill immediate demands for such Personnel Managers, a special course over two terms be given in 1944, the successful candidate to be given a certificate (not a diploma) which might be converted to a diploma later, on evidence of successful work in industrial employment..
  - ii) Only a limited number of selected students be allowed to embark on this course, and they must be graduates.
  - iii) A notice to be put up inviting interested students who will have graduated by the end of this year, to interview Mrs White in the first instance and subsequently the selection committee referred to below
- (c) Full Course:
  - i) An R.U.C Diploma in Personnel Welfare and Management be instituted.
  - ii) Entrance qualifications shall be B.A, B.A. (SS), B.Sc, B.Com.
  - iii) Only selected students be allowed to enter for the diploma, the selection being made by a Selection Committee consisting of Mrs White, Prof of Commerce, Prof of Psychology and a member of the Social Science staff.
  - iv) Recognition for the Diploma be sought from the Institute of Labour Management, London.
  - v) The normal length of the course will be twelve months after graduation but the actual length of the course may be longer for some candidates, depending on how many of the subjects in the diploma curriculum have been completed by the candidate in his degree course.
  - vi) The curriculum of each individual student to be considered by the selection Committee with power to modify the curriculum to meet special difficulties. Students who have begun their degree course before 1944, may be given special exemption to make it possible for them to complete the Diploma in twelve months.
  - vii) Curriculum: The Diploma will be awarded to candidates who have passed the following courses either for their degree or subsequently in the Diploma course:-

University Degree course:

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Economics and Economic History I - | full B.A or B.Com degree/course.         |
| 2. Economics II                       | - full B.A or B.Com degree/course.       |
| 3. Psychology I                       | - full B.A, B.Sc or B.Com degree/course. |
| 4. Psychology II                      | - full B.A, B.Sc or B.Com degree/course. |

Courses covered by University Degree courses:

5. Social Problems: full course: covered by parts of Sociology I and II
6. Social Law: full course: covered by parts of Social Work I and II
7. Industrial Organisation: half course: half of Industrial Organisation & Management given for B.Com
8. Elementary Statistics: half course: covered by Elementary Theory of Statistics and Finance given for B.Com

*(The above curriculum related to the initial programme. By 1944 the full Diploma course had been approved and is recorded in the 1944 University Calendar (p.94-96). This included the course requirements as approved by the senate and included the further requirements for the full Diploma. The Calendar reads:)*

**"R.U.C. DIPLOMA IN PERSONNEL WELFARE MANAGEMENT"**

"This Diploma has been instituted to meet the needs of those wishing to take up careers as Personnel Managers and/or Welfare Supervisors in industrial firms. Recognition for the Diploma is being sought from the Institute of Labour Management, London"

The Calendar then listed the category of Special Courses for the Diploma and the Practical work demanded.

C. Special Courses for the Diploma:

9. Personnel Management, factory planning , etc.,: full course.
10. Industrial Law: half course.
11. Native and Coloured in Industry: half course.
12. Aptitude Testing: half course.
13. Industrial Physiology and Hygiene: half course

D. Practical:

- (a) General Social Work with special reference to Industry.
- (b) Training in factories - vacation work - eight weeks to be spent in two different industries.
- (c) First-aid and Home Nursing Certificates.

E. Candidates must pass an examination written and oral, to prove their competence in the use of both official languages. It will be conducted by the Heads of the Language Department and of the Social Science Department.

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### 13. PERSONNEL RESEARCH SECTION.

#### (a) Demobilisation.

The return of the 543 employees who have left the leather industry in Port Elizabeth in order to proceed on active service has been exercising the minds of the Demobilisation Committee (leather section). Many of them have been in the industry for a very short time so that they require special intensive training. The Committee felt that this section was in the best position to make the necessary arrangements, and accordingly Mrs. Hutton, Research Officer in Port Elizabeth, was seconded as Secretary of this Committee.



*A Health Lecture organised by the Institute.*

#### (b) Health Lectures.

The experiment of holding health lectures in working time, lasting ten minutes or so, in one of the Port Elizabeth Footwear factories has been tried out. This has proved successful in that employees are more careful of their own health and are more interested in their homes and workplace. The subjects dealt with were as follows :—

- (i) Miss Stoker (Lecturer in Social Work, Rhodes University College).  
The Value of a Holiday. How to Plan for It.
- (ii) Mr. Smith (Factory Inspector).  
How to Use the Amenities in your Factory.
- (iii) Mr. Stamrood (National Savings Club).  
Thrift.
- (iv) Mr. Gardiner (Department of Labour).  
How to Prevent Accidents in the Factory.
- (v) Mr. Wild (Municipal Health Department).  
Municipal Health Services.

- (vi) Dr. Ferguson (M.O.H.).  
Hygiene to Prevent the Spread of Disease.
- (vii) Sister Gates (Municipal Health Department).  
The Care of Mother and Child.
- (viii) Dr. Laubscher (Psychiatrist).  
The Condition of the Mind and its Effect on the Body.
- (ix) Mr. Olivier (Social Welfare Department).  
Leisure Time Activities.

Mr. van den Berg had agreed to give the first lecture to introduce this series, but was unfortunately called out of town and could not fix another date.

#### (c) Lighting.

The problem of securing the optimum conditions of lighting for any work has led to two investigations this year with a third one pending. The report on one of these is attached. The relation between the type of light and the colour of leather used is being examined and, a report in connection with this is in the course of preparation. This subsequent work was undertaken at the request of the Boot and Shoe Institute.

#### (d) Ventilation.

As a by-product of the study which is being carried out on accidents and near accidents, it will be possible to draw up a report on temperature and humidity in three Port Elizabeth footwear factories. The results can be correlated with those for absenteeism also in these factories.

#### (e) Accidents.

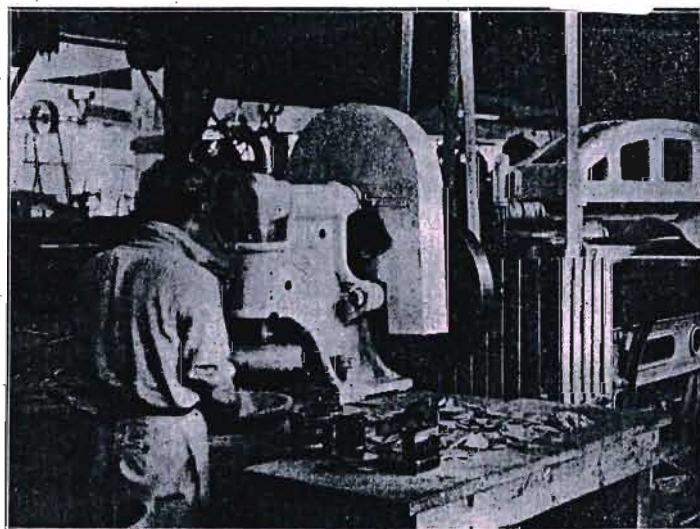
In August, 1944, a group of Port Elizabeth factories co-operated with us in keeping records of all accidents and near accidents. These have been classified according to months, days of the week, times of the day, and the room temperature range. These results have not yet been fully analysed, but the preliminary results indicate that the worst days of the weeks are Mondays and Fridays and times of the day early in the morning and late in the afternoon. The worst months have been March and April. The full report on this work will appear shortly.

Subsequently, the Workmen's Compensation Commission has made available the sum of £500 in order to carry out further research on accident prevention and accident proneness. In order to develop this, Mr. Hudson, M.A. was appointed. Mr. Hudson has devised a better method of accident recording which several firms have already adopted. This will assist in assessing more correctly the causes of accidents.

Mr. Hudson has also investigated conditions in chrome chemical factories and made recommendations for preventing chrome ulceration. These are contained in the report entitled "Chrome Ulceration in Two Chemical Factories."

The use of colour in industry has received attention for some time, and more recently has come to the fore as a means of reducing accidents. Accordingly, Mr. Hudson has visited leather factories in the Cape Province introducing the Safety Colour Code, and advising on the Three Dimensional Colour Code. This work is being carried out as a controlled experiment. Advice has also been given on the setting up of Safety Committees. Mr. Hudson has set up a battery of tests for accident proneness and will begin to use these next month.





*Machines Painted for Accident Prevention.*

(f) *Factory Welfare Board.*

There is little progress to report here. The Board is still negotiating with the Municipality for a reduction in the price of the ground which they are prepared to allow for a Factory Day Nursery. The Child Welfare Society has decided to close down the part of the creche which dealt with children under two years. As a result of discussions with this Board they reversed this decision and are continuing with this work.

A report was submitted to the Sonnenberg Committee, appointed by General Smuts to investigate the food question, and an interview with the Committee was obtained in Grahamstown. This Committee was very interested in the project of a central canteen in the North End of Port Elizabeth and have subsequently sent an expert caterer to survey the position with regard to finding a building, equipment, cost etc. These food projects are now under the Department of Social Welfare. This report has not yet been received. The financial position would be this — the local authorities, in this case manufacturers, will have to provide 25% of the initial outlay of money, the Government will provide 25% and the remaining 50% will be in the form of an interest free loan from the Government. The meals will be fixed at as low a price as possible; and should any losses be incurred these will also be shared by the Government. This is so advantageous a scheme that we are anxious to proceed with it.

(g) *Personnel Welfare and Management.*

As an experiment a short intensive two weeks course was held in December for people already in industry and who are interested in this work. The month was awkward, but this had to be decided by other factors. Lectures were given by Dr. Gale, Miss Fowler, Professor Liddell, Miss Reynecke, Professor Wild, Dr. Mansveldt, Professor White and Mrs. White. As a result of the interest

and enthusiasm of the members of this course together with that of the students in the post graduate Diploma course, it was decided that a South African Branch of the Institute of Labour Management should be formed. This was approved by the London Headquarters of the Institute. Accordingly a meeting has been called for August 20th, 1945, in Port Elizabeth to discuss this proposal. This should increase still further the interest and knowledge of personnel matters.



*An Institute trained Factory Personnel Officer at work.*

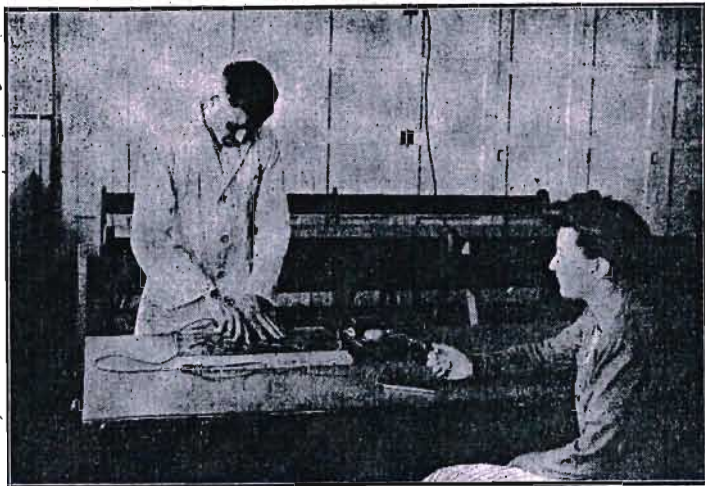
Training of students for the post graduate Diploma in Personnel Management and Welfare is still being continued, and last years students are now in footwear factories. These trainees provide the link inside the factory between employer and employee and make a considerable contribution to good industrial relations. In wartime Britain, so important did Mr. Ernest Bevin, Minister of Labour consider their function to be that he persuaded the British Government to pay for the training of these potential welfare officers and personnel managers as well as their travelling expenses and maintenance, and at the same time an emergency regulation was passed making it obligatory for employers of more than 250 workpeople to employ such an officer. They have made a considerable contribution to Britain's wartime efficiency.

(h) *Fatigue.*

An experiment was carried out on a team of girls in one factory engaged in machining army boot uppers in order to find out the variation in production from hour to hour and room temperature readings were also recorded. As far as the results have been analysed there is a steady rise in production during the morning, but in the afternoon from 3 o'clock onwards there is a gradual decline until the last half hour when production is very low. One difficulty in carrying out this study was the amount of broken time amongst operatives and the number of times when machines broke down, or when operatives were waiting for work.

(i) *Absenteeism and Labour Turnover.*

The collection of statistics on these problems is still being continued and special investigations have been carried out in three cases with satisfactory results. A large quantity of statistical data has been collected for 1943 and 1944, covering about 3,000 people. There is a very slight upward tendency for the absentee rates in the second half of the year, but the results are not dogmatic enough on which to base a new policy. It has been found, however, that where welfare officers have been employed, the firms, through increased attention to health arrangements have been able to reduce their absentee rates.



*Aptitude Testing for Clickers.*

(j) *Aptitude Tests.*

The Personnel Research Section has set up a group of aptitude tests for clickers, another for making, finishing and rough stuff operatives and have also a battery for potential closing room and shoe room operatives. These are being used in factories where there are personnel officers and also are administered where a research officer is available. The Apprenticeship Committee in Port Elizabeth has decided that apprentices for the footwear industry must go through these tests before they are accepted.

Miss Kinsman has been working on an Intelligence Test which could be applied to any group of potential industrial workers. This thesis should be read at the end of the year.

(k) *Recruitment of Labour.*

This section has carried out a follow up of the different approaches which it has tried in interesting school leavers in entering this industry. It was found that the best approach was through employees already employed in the industry, and that even when they heard of footwear factories at school it was through talking with a friend in the industry that they finally decided to enter the trade.

The difficulty which was being experienced in Port Elizabeth of obtaining suitable European learners led to Mrs. Hutton being asked to carry out a special investigation. This report is entitled "An Investigation into European Learner Labour Supply in Port Elizabeth."

(l) *Training.*

One factory has now established a learner's room for closing room girls. This has proved successful in speeding up their learning period, improved quality and has also helped to cut down labour turnover.

(m) *Publications.*

Articles on different aspects of this section of the Institute's work have been contributed to "Labour Management" and "Industry and Trade." All the research work carried out in this section was written up for publication at the end of 1944. Unfortunately this work was held up indefinitely by the printers through shortage of staff. New arrangements have been made for publication at the end of this year.

## PERSONNEL RESEARCH IN SOUTH AFRICA (1946): CONTENTS PAGE

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## DUTIES OF PERSONNEL MANAGER

His or her duties also vary very much from one factory to another, mainly according to the emphasis which a factory puts on different aspects of personnel relations. Some may emphasise the selection side and demand specialisation on this type of equipment, others may be more interested in the health aspect, and others again on working conditions and recreation. The following list of duties therefore may vary considerably from one firm to another:

### *Employment side—*

1. Maintenance of contacts with schools, Juvenile Affairs Board, etc., in order to obtain co-operation between schools and industry. This is very

2. All applicants for work should be interviewed in a room set aside for this purpose and the application details recorded by the welfare officer. This establishes good personal relationships from the beginning, and any necessary advice can be given about health, problems of the care of children in the case of married women workers, etc.
3. Selection of employees in co-operation with foremen. If aptitude tests have been developed these should be administered by the welfare supervisor and records kept.
4. Checking up of training of learners and their progress. In this way a more comprehensive study can be made of the problems of selection. Also, by means of a periodic review, particularly when statutory advances become payable, a more efficient check can be kept on the training of employees.
5. Talks should be given to new employees on factory rules and an opportunity taken to emphasise the firm's policy towards employees and such items as discipline, time-keeping, notification of absence, any sports facilities, and so on. In this talk also, an opportunity should be taken of telling, and if possible, showing the various processes which go to making the firm's product. In this way, the employee discovers how each little bit is related and the importance of the small section which he is doing becomes clear. It should be emphasised how slackness on his part affects the work of the other employees.
6. Record cards should, of course, be kept for each employee, both on the employment side and on the health side. If he should leave, the exact details are then available for any future re-application.
7. A knowledge of the principles of fatigue and their application to rest pauses, accidents, methods of work, is most essential. All this helps to reduce wasteful labour turnover.
8. Any schemes for Health, Unemployment and Pensions should be under the supervision of this department.
9. Interest in works' committees is gradually increasing, and this should be stimulated so that there is more co-operation between workers and management.
10. The welfare supervisor must keep abreast of current practice in labour management so that she can inform her firm on the latest findings.
11. Responsibility for seeing that the provisions of the Factory Act are carried out.
12. A knowledge of suitable lodging and billeting accommodation is most valuable.

### *Health side—*

1. Supervision of all first aid. This should be concentrated in one room and under individual control. This avoids wounds being dressed in unsuitable surroundings by works people. The risk of sepsis is diminished and so absences are reduced. Redressing can also be controlled.
2. Supervision of ventilation, lighting, seating and working conditions in general from point of view of health.
3. Supervision of any employee who seems undernourished and the giving of extra milk and liver oil etc. Advising on better food where necessary.



5. Maintenance of sickness and accident records so that the firm has full data in considering policy re effects of ventilation, departmental accident rates, sickness rates, etc.
6. Supervision of cleanliness of factory and cloakrooms.
7. Visiting of sick workers. This establishes a valuable personal contact between the firm and the workers. Advice can be given on convalescence, and financial help when this is necessary. From this knowledge, care can be exercised as to the type of work to which an employee returns.
8. When necessary a canteen should be established. In any case the personnel manager should be able to advise the employees on nutrition and help the Red Cross Society in its national health campaign by disseminating their literature on health.
9. Supervision of Workmen's Compensation cases.

By this means, therefore, we could hope to promote a healthy and contented labour force and we could envisage the best utilisation of our manpower in the national interests.

### PROPAGANDA FOR LABOUR MANAGEMENT

In order to carry out this, it is necessary for manufacturers to be made aware of their own needs. Therefore, as far as is practicable, a personal approach should be made. The co-operation of Industrial Councils and Trade Unions is also essential, because if the function of a welfare supervisor is not clearly defined, their suspicion and antagonism will be aroused. This would be fatal to the success of the work, as co-operation is essential if the maximum benefit is to be derived from these appointments. One Trade Union leader once said—"Foremen we know and managers we know, but welfare workers are neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red herring." It is only by making the whole position plain from the start, the professional status and the position of the welfare supervisor in the hierarchy of management, that the best work can be carried out.

### POSITION OF PERSONNEL MANAGER IN INDUSTRY

This body of men and women personnel managers must be on a level with the other functional managers in their firm. This professional standing can, however, only be attained through tradition, training and good work. The highest traditions can be handed on to us through membership of the Institute of Labour Management in London and through forming a branch in this country so that prospective trainees may be interviewed and recommended or otherwise for this specialised training.

This membership will only be conferred by means of approved training and experience, and, initially, this training to trainees can only be given by people with the necessary qualifications and practical experience.

### DIPLOMA COURSE IN PERSONNEL WELFARE AND MANAGEMENT

Rhodes University College

It was decided that the demand for trained Personnel Managers and Welfare Supervisors is sufficient for Rhodes University College to institute a special post-graduate Diploma in Personnel Welfare and Management. Recognition and approval for this Diploma has been obtained from the Institute of Labour Management in London, so that the standard of training and professional standing is equivalent to that in Great Britain.

Special regulations have been laid down for the Diploma, and the training which is necessary is an intensive one. Two graduates have already qualified and gone into industry, more are being trained in 1945, and twenty-four have already made application for admission to the course for 1946. The regulations laid down are as follows

This Diploma has been instituted to meet the needs of those wishing to take up careers as Personnel Managers and/or Welfare Supervisors in industrial firms. Recognition for the Diploma has been obtained from the Institute of Labour Management, London.

1. Only selected students will be admitted to the course. Intending candidates must submit their names to the Registrar for consideration by the Selection Committee as early as possible, and preferably during their final degree year.
2. Candidates for the Diploma course must have the B.A., B.A.(S.S.), B.Sc., or B.Com. degree
3. The normal length of the course will be 12 months after graduation, but the actual length of the course may be greater for some candidates, depending on how many of the courses in the Diploma curriculum have been completed for the degree.
4. The Selection Committee will consider the curriculum of each student with power to modify it to meet special cases.
5. *Curriculum*—The Diploma will be awarded to candidates who have passed the following courses either for their degrees or subsequently in the Diploma course. (A full course extends over four terms, half course over two terms.)

#### A.—University degree courses:

1. Economics and Economics His. I: full bachelor's degree course.
2. Economics II.
3. Psychology I.
4. Psychology II.

#### B.—Courses covered by University degree courses:

5. Social problems: full course: (covered by parts of Sociol. I and II).
6. Social Law: full course: (covered by parts of Soc. Work I and II).
7. Industrial Organisation: half course: (covered by half of B.Com. course Indus. Organisation and Management I).
8. Elementary statistics: half course: (covered by half of B.Com. course Elementary Theory of Statistics and Finance).

#### C.—Special Courses for the Diploma:

9. Personnel Management, Factory Planning, etc., full course.
10. Industrial Law—half course.
11. Native and Coloured in industry—half course.
12. Aptitude testing—half course.
13. Industrial Physiology and Hygiene—half course.

- (a) General Social Work with special reference to Industry.
- (b) Training in factories—vacation work—eight weeks to be spent in two different industries.
- (c) First-aid and Home Nursing Certificates.

E.—Candidates must pass an examination written and oral, to prove their competence in the use of both official languages. It will be conducted by the Heads of the Language Departments and of the Social Science Department.

Steps have been taken to bring the course to the notice of students in all Universities and to industrialists.

### REFRESHER COURSE FOR PERSONNEL OFFICERS, RESEARCH OFFICERS, Etc.,

Leather Industries Research Institute, December, 1944

Conscious of the needs of personnel officers and research officers and of welfare supervisors, junior executives and trade unionists who are already in jobs, the writer organised a refresher course early in December, 1944.

The lectures covered organisation of industry, industrial legislation, aptitude testing, industrial medicine, education and industry, and personnel management. Those who attended the course found it beneficial.

### FORMATION OF A S.A. INSTITUTE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

As a result of these courses, and of the other contacts which have been made, it has been decided to form a S.A. Institute of Personnel Management. Three meetings of this body have been held in Port Elizabeth, and it is hoped to organise on a national basis, holding a general meeting and conference in July, 1946.

The constitution provides for three classes of members, honorary members, *viz.*, people who have rendered outstanding services to the Institute; members, who must be directly and solely engaged in the profession of Personnel Management, or who have other specialised training, Associate Members who have a direct connection with the profession.

### PRACTICAL RESULTS ACHIEVED

- (a) Improved recruitment of personnel.
- (b) Reduction in labour turnover through improved selection methods.
- (c) Increased co-operation between employers and employed, through establishment of Safety First Committees.
- (d) Reduction in absenteeism through home visiting, health clubs, etc.

## APPENDIX E

### SYLLABUS OF TRAINING FOR PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

THE syllabus of training set out below, which was approved by the Institute of Labour Management in 1939, must be interpreted solely as what the Institute at that time required in the form of training, tested by examinations. The qualifications for membership of the Institute as determined by a general meeting of its members are additional and primary. Further, this statement may be modified after the war. It is merely offered as a syllabus of study, though, subject to later endorsement and to adequate facilities for teaching along these lines, it may be regarded as an adequate form of training in personnel management.

#### EXAMINATIONS

##### A. INTERMEDIATE EXAMINATION

- (a) Candidates for this examination must have been student members of the Institute for at least twelve months, and must be not less than 21 years of age.
- (b) The examination is divided into two parts.
- (c) Candidates must satisfy the examiner in Part I before proceeding to Part II.

#### PART I

##### (a) *Fundamentals of Industrial Administration*

Elementary treatment of the functions of industrial management, with extension of the general principles of management. Division of functions. Personnel administration—the human factor, industrial relations in practice, outline of industrial legislation.

Function of production. Function of distribution. Function of development.

Office management function: office organization and method, statistics and graphs.

Financial and accounting function: financial statements, principles of industrial accounting, principles of costing and estimating, control of expenditure, financial responsibility and control.

Secretarial and legal function: elements of commercial law, the limited company and partnership, other forms of association.

##### (b) *Economics*

The present organization of industry and commerce, including the factors determining the geographic distribution of industry and the size of the business unit. Types of industrial and commercial undertakings. Growth of industrial combinations. Value and price. Money and the

banking system. Foreign trade and exchanges. The functions and effects of speculation, investment and insurance. The national income and its distribution. Causes of variations in wages, profits, interest and rent.

*Note.* The syllabus in this subject will be brought into line with the common syllabus in economics to be instituted by the bankers and secretaries, who have recently agreed upon a common scheme of training. Their current separate syllabuses are on the same standard as this.

##### (c) *Industrial History*

The background of industry (elementary) and the growth of industrialization. The effects of the introduction of machine industry; the developments of transport; changes in industrial organization. Origin and development of the commercial system. International trade and exchange. Natural resources and commodities of world trade. The history of the monetary standards, and general prices; poor law; trade unionism. The great war, 1914–18, and subsequent economic developments.

##### (d) *Elements of Accounting and Costing*

###### (i) *Accounting*

Definition and objects of book-keeping. Double-entry principles. Ledger. Trial balance. Trading account. Profit and loss account. Balance sheet. Current accounts. Consignment accounts. Self-balancing ledgers. Depreciation. Reserves. Accounts of joint stock companies including issue of shares and debentures, forfeiture and re-issue. Dividends and debenture interest. Double account system. Mechanized accountancy.

###### (ii) *Costing*

The effect of cost on output and price; the meaning of total cost, variable or prime cost, marginal cost; the relation between cost and revenue. Cost data as an element in the control of efficiency and prevention of waste; stores accounting; labour account. Methods of collecting costs; comparative advantages of statistical and book-keeping methods; elements of double-entry costing with some reference to standard costs; relationship of the cost department to the estimating and other departments.

*Note.* One paper will be set on the above two subjects with compulsory questions in each. Only general knowledge of the subjects is required. Candidates will, however, be required to attend the set courses in each subject and to register 85 per cent of attendances.

#### PART II

##### (a) *Business Organization*

Nature, purposes, principles and types of organization, inside and outside the business unit. The functions of management, purchasing, manufacturing, selling, finance, office management and staffing. Interrelation of departments; common and special features. Construction and meaning of organization charts.

##### (b) *Business Statistics*

Statistical investigations. The collection and interpretation of statistical data. Definitions. Methods of analysis. Use of averages. Trends. Graphical methods, including use of ratio scales. Introduction to index numbers. Sources of public statistics useful in business. Application and use of statistics in business.



(c) *Personnel Administration*

Purpose and responsibilities of a personnel department. Personnel policy and personnel study; employment records; graphs. Works councils and external organizations; suggestion schemes. Recruitment of process workers and office staff. Physical fitness of personnel; women workers; social activities. Factory hygiene and safety requirements; accident prevention. Vocational psychology; training personnel; learners and newcomers. Development work: lectures; works and office visits. Hours of work: legal employment obligations. Settlement of rates of wages and salaries: remuneration and incentives. Functions of the foreman: small and large organizations compared. Leadership: what it means and how it can be developed.

(d) *Elements of Industrial Law*

The common law of master and servant and statutory modifications. The principles of workmen's compensation. Legislation affecting hours of work, safety, health, wages and other working conditions of employed persons. The law of associations—restraint of trade, trade unions. Candidates are expected to have an elementary knowledge of the English judicial system.

## B. FINAL EXAMINATION

(a) Candidates must be not less than 23 years of age, and may not enter for this examination until two years after the completion of the Intermediate Examination.

(b) Candidates must satisfy the examiners in Part I before proceeding to Part II.

## PART I

(a) *Factory Organization and Management*

Relation to general administration. The analytical approach to management problems. Purchasing and stock control. Design and development. Production, process planning and control. Inspection. Distribution; markets and methods. Factory and plant lay-out. Motion and time study. Estimating and rate fixing. Span of control.

(b) *Principles and Methods of Remuneration*

Organization of wages office: time recording, wage systems. Liaison between works departments and accounts department. Definitions: prime cost, oncosts or overheads, direct and indirect charges. How a sales price is made up: the sales pound. Cost allocation of labour: payment by results considerations. Overhead calculation and distribution: machine hour rate. Booking of process material: by-product problems. Unit and standard costs: cost ratios. Manufacturing and departmental profit and loss accounts. Interlocking of cost accounts and financial accounts. Transport service costs: selling costs, cost studies in plant investment. Graphical methods for presenting cost data.

(c) *Industrial Law*

Legislation specially affecting workers in the factories, workshops, etc. Protective provisions relating to particular classes of workers, such as women, young persons, and children. National health and unemployment

insurance. Collective contracts; strikes and lockouts; picketing; unlawful breaches of contract; civil conspiracy; interference with contractual relations. Arbitration and conciliation.

## PART II

(a) *Industrial Relations and Personnel Management*

(i) (a) and (b) Landmarks in trade unionism from 1760 to 1937; special reference to successive periods in relation to economic and political background.

(c) Contemporary problems: (i) of structure; (ii) of relationship (e.g. sectional relationship, relations with employers' federations and with government).

(d) Trade boards: history and contribution to industrial relations.

(e) Whitley councils: history and contributions to industrial relations.

(f) Works councils and committee work. Scope and nature of this work and relationship to general organization.

(g) Contemporary tendencies in industrial relations.

(ii) (h) Evolution of personnel management as a factor in industrial organization—pre-war, war, and post-war. Present position of personnel.

(i) Administration: sources of labour; selection of labour; introduction to work.

(j) and (k) Training; transference; promotion; dismissals and retirement.

(l) Problems of conduct and behaviour. Factory, office, and stores etiquette.

(m) Significance of foremanship in industrial organization. Selection and training. Scope and responsibilities.

(n) Industrial and social stability. Contribution of a personnel policy.

(b) *Factory Sanitation and Hygiene*

Law as to factory hygiene. Powers of Government departments. Health services in industry (e.g. local authorities, insurance committees; central council for health education); accidents and industrial diseases; dangerous and unhealthy industries; duties of certifying surgeons. Factory construction in relation to sanitation and hygiene. Working conditions. Voluntary provision for factory hygiene. Medical, dental, and other special schemes.

(c) *Social and Industrial Psychology*

(i) Industrial organization considered psychologically; groups and their reactions; the psychology of control; industrial groups; employer groups; worker groups; collective action; integration; trade unions; the psychology of negotiation.

(ii) The psychology of learning and of instinct; training; transfer; repression; maladjustment; psycho-therapy; individual differences; personality and temperament.

(iii) Vocational guidance; vocational selection; selection by interview; personality rating; selection by tests; training of selected candidates; psychology of incentives.

**INSTITUTE OF PERSONNEL/PEOPLE MANAGEMENT**

**TABLE OF HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

# INSTITUTE OF PERSONNEL/PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

## TABLE OF HISTORICAL INFORMATION

YEAR	PRESIDENT	DIRECTOR	JOURNAL	EDITOR	MEMBER-SHIP	CONVENTION THEME
1946	Dr F G Hill					
1947			"Personnel Management"			
1948	Dr F G Hill		"Personnel Management"			
1949			"Personnel Management"			
1950			"Personnel Management"			
1951			"Personnel Management"			
1952	W H Felling		"Personnel Management"	R T Hofmeyr		
1953			"Personnel Management"			
1954			"Personnel Management"			
1955			"Personnel Management"			
1956	Dr A J Fox		"Personnel Management"			

1957			"Personnel Management"			1 <sup>st</sup> Annual Convention (Jhbg Branch)
1958			"Personnel Management"			
1959	Dr F G Hill		"Personnel Management"			
1960	Dr F G Hill		"Personnel Management"			
1961	R T Hofmeyer		"Personnel Management"			"Personnel Management, Productivity and the Bantu Labour Force" Vereeniging-Riveria Hotel: 11-13 Oct 10 speakers.
1962	D J M Vorster		"Personnel Management"			"Current Trends in Personnel Practice". Durban: Killarney Hotel: 8-10 Oct
1963	Ms N Lester		"Personnel Management"			"Personnel Management: An Assessment" Hartebeesfontein - Santa Barbara Hotel: 7-9 October (60 delegates)
1964	E Thacker		"Personnel Management"			1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting of National Council (Tvl, Natal, WP) "The Development of People". Vereeniging: 20 October

# INSTITUTE OF PERSONNEL/PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

## TABLE OF HISTORICAL INFORMATION

YEAR	PRESIDENT	DIRECTOR	JOURNAL	EDITOR	MEMBER-SHIP	CONVENTION THEME
1965	E T Thacker (d)		Personnel Management			"The Conservation of Manpower" Sea Point; Arthur's Seat Hotel. 12 -14 October
1966	R V Sutton		Personnel Management			10 <sup>th</sup> Annual Convention "Productivity - Perspectives for Personnel Management" Johannesburg: Travelodge. 11 - 13 Oct.: (9 speakers) 1st Sunday.Times Cocktail Party
1967	H O Humphreys (d)		Personnel Management			?? Umhlanga Rocks: Beverley Hills Hotel
1968	D F Hanson (d)		Personnel Mgt			
1969	B Mattison (d)		Personnel Management			"Personnel Management in a Changing World." Cape Town
1970	Mrs V Mickelburgh	D. Jackson (Executive Director)	Personnel Management			"Improving Business Results: The Evolving Personnel Contribution: Johannesburg: 13-15 Aug
1971	R T Hofmeyer (d)	D. Jackson	Personnel Management			

1972	G A N Nattrass (d)	D. Jackson	Personnel Management			
1973	M G Swart	D. Jackson	"People and Profits": July 1.(1)	Ms V Segal		No Theme? Herzberg the drawcard. Johannesburg: Carlton Hotel: 23-25 July
1974	D F Hanson (d)	D Jackson	"People and Profits"	Ms V Segal		"Interface: The Challenge of Black/White Labour Relations in Southern Africa" (Nearly 500 attended: 3 black male speakers)
1975	D F Hanson (d)	D Jackson	"People and Profits"	Ms V Segal		"The Training Challenge". Heerengracht Hotel: Cape Town: 4-6 August (35 speakers - 2 black male)
1976	G S Whyte (d)	P Berry	"People and Profits"	Ms M Fineberg		20 <sup>th</sup> Annual Convention "Pay Power": Johannesburg: Carlton Hotel: 22-24 March
1977	G S Whyte (d)	P Berry	"People and Profits"	Ms W Antonie		"Quo Vadis: Jo'burg: RAU: 8-10 Sept (22 speakers: 5 black)
1978	G S Whyte (d)	P Berry	"People and Profits"	Ms D Fiansky		Theme unknown. Jo'burg: 27-28 Sept
1979	B M Chalmers	R Cawood (Business Manager)	"People and Profits"	Ms D Fiansky		"Into the Eighties: An Investigation of Individuals, Organizations and Societies" Pretoria: CSIR: 29-30 Aug (3 overseas speakers)

1980	R V Sutton	R Cawood	"People and Profits"	Ms D Fiansky		"Options & Opportunities: A New Industrial Society" Pretoria: CSIR. 20-21 Aug (13 speakers: no black or female speakers)
1981	R V Sutton	R Cawood	"People and Profits"	Ms D Fiansky		"The Second Industrial Revolution: Southern Africa Dilemma". Pretoria: CSIR 23-25 Sept.
1982	P W G Rossouw (d. 2003)	W Crous	"IPM Manpower Journal": March: 1 (1)	P Berry		"Industrial Relations: Productivity in the Third World". Sun City. (489 attended)
1983	Dr J C Gouws (d. 2003)	W Crous	"IPM Manpower Journal"			"Human resource Management in a Changing Environment". Sun City: 28-30 Sept (633 delegates)
1984	Dr W S de Villiers	W Crous	"IPM Manpower Journal"			"Human Resource Management: In Search of Excellence" Sun City: 3-5 Oct.
1985	D E Lehmann	W Crous	IPM Journal			"First World : Third World - The Challenge". Durban: 1-3 Oct. (36 Speakers: 6 black male, 5 white female speakers)
1986	M C Calf	W Crous	IPM Journal	Ms B Spence		30 <sup>th</sup> Annual Convention "Managing for Growth - The Human Factor". Johannesburg 30 Sept-2 Oct (750 delegates)



1987	Dr J C Gouws (d)	W Crous	IPM Journal			“Human Resources: Strategic Alternatives”. Sun City: 28-30 Sept (50 speakers) (1060 delegates)
1988	H F Jacobs	W Crous	“IPM Journal”			“Human Resources: The Competitive Edge”. Sun City: 12-14 Oct. (1004 delegates)
1989	M B Burgess (d)	W Crous	“IPM Journal”	Ms H de Villiers		“The High Road: Human Resource Strategies”. Sun City: 1-3 November.
1990	T H Pegel	W Crous	“People Dynamics”	Ms H de Villiers		“The New South Africa: Implications for Human Resource Management”. Sun City: 17-19 Oct. (47 Speakers: 6 black male, 1 black female, 6 white female speakers)
1991	A J Frost	Ms D Smith	“People Dynamics”	Ms H de Villiers		“Human resources: Building Profitable Partnerships” Sun City: 23-25 Sept. (57 speakers: 4 black male, 7 white female speakers) (996 delegates)
1992	A J Frost	Ms D Smith	“People Dynamics”	Ms H de Villiers		“South Africa in Transformation: Making Human Capital Work” Sun City: 19-21 Oct. (905 delegates)

1993	V I Latti	Ms d Smith	"People Dynamics"	Ms H de Villiers		"Striving for Global Economic Competitiveness: The Human Factor" Sun City: 18-20 October
1994	J B Magwaza	Ms D Smith	"People Dynamics"	Ms H de Villiers		
1995	J B Magwaza	Ms D Smith	"People Dynamics"	Ms H de Villiers		Reconciliation Convention "Power, Performance, People: The Making of Competitiveness ". Midrand: Gallagher Estates, 12-14 September (704 delegates)

1996	Ms L Rutherford	Ms P Gamede	"People Dynamics" (48 pages)	A Hosking		40 <sup>th</sup> Annual Convention Celebrating the South African Soul: Making the Madiba Magic Work". (760 delegates)
1997 (Name Change)	Ms Z Ebrahim	Ms P Gamede	"People Dynamics"	A Hosking		Now <i>Institute of People Management</i>
1998	T Tsukudu	D Swart (Acting)	"People Dynamics"	A Hosking		"Enlightenment and Opportunity of the African Renaissance: The Leap to Global Confidence". Sun City: 26-28 October

1999	T Tsukudu	D Swart (Acting)	"People Dynamics"	A Hosking		"Harnessing our Knowledge and Diversity into the next Millenium" (African Renaissance in Practice) Sun City: 1-3 Nov
2000	T Tsukudu		"People Dynamics"	A Hosking		"Investing in People for Growth". Sun City: 30 Oct- 1 Nov
2001	M Makwana	Ms A Goodford	"People Dynamics"			
2002	M Makwana	Ms A Goodford	"People Dynamics"			"Sharpen Your HR & People Management Skills for Global Competitiveness: Africans Making Waves in the Globe" Sun City: 26-28 August. (31 Speakers)
2003	M Makwana	Ms A Goodford	"People Dynamics"			"Thinking Ahead: Towards Peak Performance and Sustainable Growth". Sun City: 3-5 Aug.

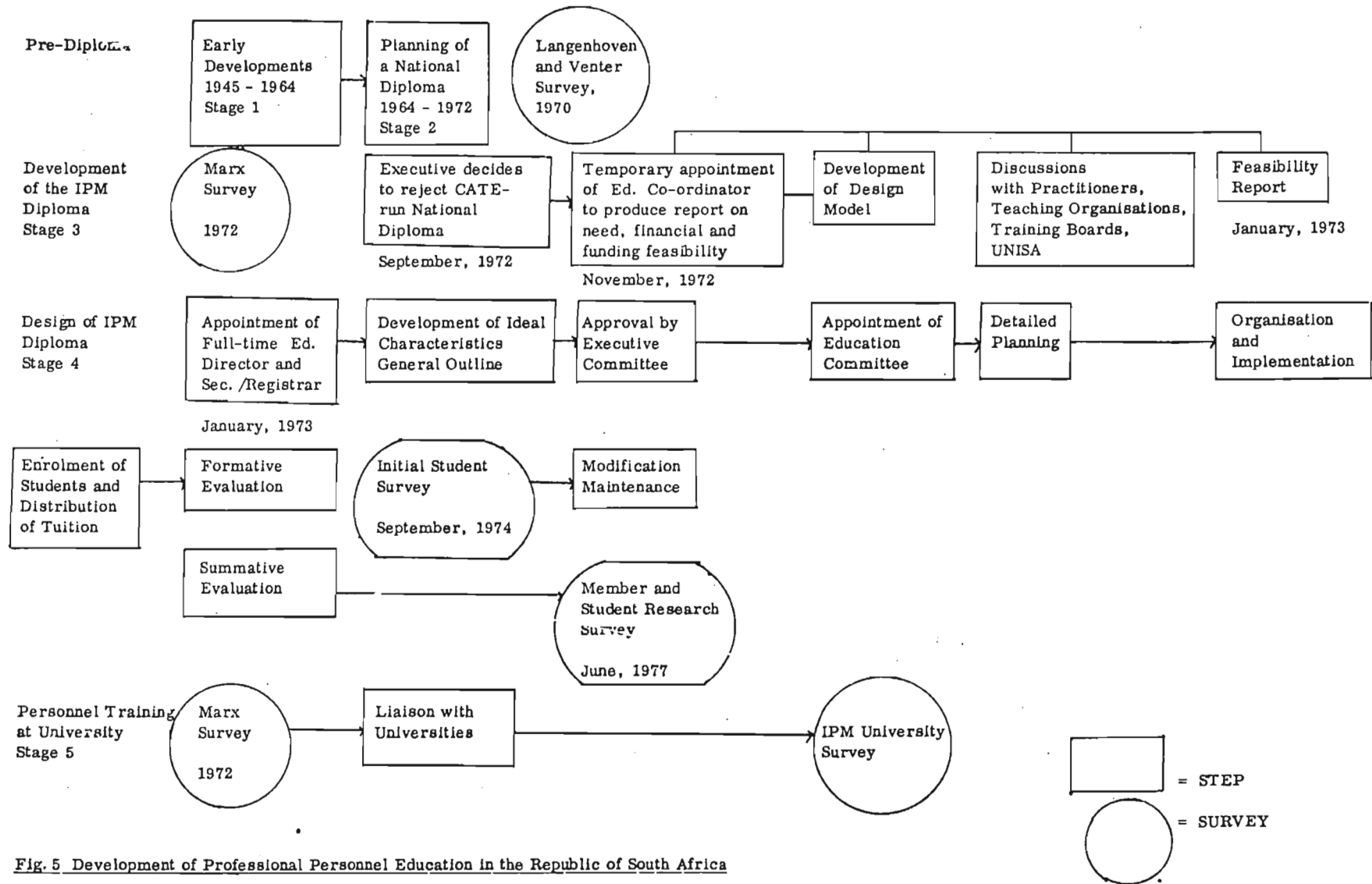


Fig. 5 Development of Professional Personnel Education in the Republic of South Africa

**INSTITUTE OF PERSONNEL/PEOPLE MANAGEMENT**  
**FINANCE AND MEMBERSHIP**

YEAR	INCOME	EXPEND- ITURE	INFLATION RATE %	MEMBER- SHIP	OBSERVATION / COMMENT
1965			3.2	545	
1966			3.8	397	Tvl Branch only
1967			2.3		
1968			2.9	764	Tvl 464, Border 10, Uitenhage 21, Natal 118, WP 121, PE 30
1969			3.5	890	
1970			4.2		
1971			6.9		
1972			7.3		
1973			9.9	1277	Name change: IPM (South Africa)
1974			14.2	1546	
1975			11.4		
1976			11.6	4000	
1977			10.4		
1978			11.5		
1979			14.0		
1980			15.8		
1981			13.9		
1982	664 735	728 834	13.8		
1983	764 936	743 558	11.0		

1984			13.2		
1985	896 109	890 699	18.6		
1986	1 159 517	1 134 332	18.0	6500	
1987			14.7	5612	
1988			12.6	5890	
1989			15.3	6757	includes 387 corporate members
1990			14.6	7147	“ 445 “
1991			16.2	7091	“ 437 “
1992	6 450 552	5 925 670	9.6	6927 430?	
1993	7 025 454	6 312 452	9.5	6838 418?	
1994	7 946 652	7 343 494	9.9	6896?	White-47.6%: Black-23.9%: Coloured - 0.6%: Indian - 0.7%
1995					
1996					
1997					
1998					
1999					
2000					
2001					
2002					
2003					

## ANALYSIS OF ARTICLES BY MAIN TOPIC CONTENT

*PEOPLE AND PROFITS*

July 1973 - June 1978

Main Topic / Content of Article	No. of Articles	% of Total
Affirmative Action/Black Dev	23	4.7
Benefits/Pension	7	1.4
Careers/Mentoring	10	2.0
Change management	2	0.4
Codes of Conduct	3	0.6
Communication issues	23	4.7
Computerisation	4	0.8
Educational issues	10	2.0
Future scenario	3	0.6
HRM/Pers Mgt in general	15	3.1
IPM Issues	6	1.2
Industrial Relations	40	8.0
Job Evaluation	8	1.6
Legal issues/Law	18	3.7
Mgt Dev/ General Mgt/Objectives	20	4.3
Manpower Planning	12	2.5
Miscellaneous	33	6.8
Motivation	5	1.0
Organisational Dev	3	0.6
Gender/Women	8	0.8
Personnel Services Admin	16	3.3
Professionalisation/SABPP	6	1.2
Racism	2	0.4
Redundancy/Unemployment	11	2.3
Recruitment/Testing/Testing	26	5.4
Remuneration/Pay	19	3.9
Social Issues/Soc Responsibility	6	1.2
Training/Development	103	20.8
Productivity	26	5.4
Performance Appraisal	8	1.6
Welfare/EAP/Health	18	3.7
<b>TOTALS: Categories - 32</b>	<b>Articles - 495</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



**SMITH AND NEPHEW ORIGINAL UNION AGREEMENT**

1. This Agreement is made this 19TH day of JULY 1974 between THE NATIONAL UNION OF TEXTILE WORKERS and THE TEXTILE WORKERS' INDUSTRIAL UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA, both of Central Court, 125 Gale Street, Durban, (hereinafter referred to as "the Unions") of the one part, and SMITH & NEPHEW LIMITED of 30 Gillitts Road, Pinetown, (hereinafter referred to as "the Company") of the other part.

In consideration of their mutual promises and agreements, the parties to this Agreement agree as follows:-

2. PERIOD OF OPERATION

(a) This Agreement shall come into operation when signed by both parties and shall remain binding for a period of 3 (three) years, provided that any clause may be re-negotiated at any time if found to be inadequate by either party, and that either party may re-open negotiations on the question of remuneration on or about 15th August each year.

3. DEFINITIONS

(a) Unless inconsistent with the context, any expressions appearing in the Agreement which are defined in the Industrial Conciliation Act, 1956, shall have the same meaning as in that Act; provided that "employee" shall mean any person in the service of the Company, regardless of race.

(b) /.....



Signed as an expression of general intentions under the specific agreement that so soon as a formal legal document to replace these presents is available the parties hereto will execute the same in replacement hereof.

The partners undertake to use their best endeavours to finalise the said legal document within a period of three weeks from the date hereof.

*[Signature]*

SMITH & NEPHEW LTD.  
MANAGING DIRECTOR

ON FRIDAY 19TH JULY 1974

*[Signature]*

*[Signature]*

*[Signature]*

*[Signature]*

*S. K. Burnala*  
*on behalf of [unclear]*



**INSTITUTE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT**

**21 st ANNUAL CONVENTION BROCHURE**

**8 - 10 September 1977**

**RAND AFRIKAANS UNIVERSITY**

# 1977 CONVENTION COMMITTEE

## CONVENTION DIRECTOR

J. Dickerson, M.I.P.M.  
Vice President, National Events  
Institute of Personnel Management (Southern Africa)

## CONVENTION PRODUCER

P. Berry, M.I.P.M.  
Executive Director  
Institute of Personnel Management (Southern Africa)

## CONVENTION CHAIRMAN

J. Coetzee, M.I.P.M.  
Chain Personnel Manager  
Edgars Stores Limited

## CATERING

D. Way Aff. I.P.M.  
Training Manager  
Greatermans Stores Limited

## FRONT OF HOUSE AND ENTERTAINMENT

B. Venter, M.I.P.M.  
Personnel Manager  
Nordberg Manufacturing Co. (SA) (Pty) Ltd.

## BUSINESS MANAGER

P. Möller, M.I.P.M.  
Personnel Manager, Training  
Dowson & Dobson (Pty) Limited

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

R. Wessels Aff. I.P.M.  
Public Relations Executive  
Afrox Limited

## AUDIO-VISUALS

R. Wilson

## REGISTRATION

S. Stevens, Aff. I.P.M.  
Training Course Co-Ordinator  
Institute of Personnel Management (Southern Africa)

## SECRETARY

T. Jarvis, Aff. I.P.M.  
Training Assistant  
Afrox Limited.



## WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO?

"Do you know where you're going to? Do you like the things that life is showing you? Where are you going to — do you know? Do you get what you're hoping for? When you look behind you there's no open door. What are you hoping for, **DO YOU KNOW?**"

## DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING TO?

Lyric by Gerry Goffin, Music by Michael Masser. Theme from 'Mahogany'

Previous IPM National Conventions were characterised by economic and socio-political complacency -- the presentations, therefore, were often academic.

In 1977 this is not the case!

We are faced instead, with an economic and political system which no longer resembles the past, and which the specialists have trouble interpreting.

What chances are in the offing? What crises lie in the immediate future?

One way to organise our thinking about such questions is to create a picture of a possible future — to design a "scenario". "**Quo Vadis**" is such a scenario, designed to help you organise a vast amount of material into a coherent plausible form — to show you how the present might transform itself into the future.

# "QUO VADIS?"

## WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO?

### SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY

Specialist, single topic Conventions are a luxury we cannot afford in 1977.

"Quo Vadis" will therefore cover all aspects of Personnel and Training Management:

- Industrial Relations
- Ethics and Professionalism
- Manning
- Training
- Management Development
- Administration
- The Broader Social Aspect

### TARGET AUDIENCE.

- All levels of *personnel* and *training practitioners* who need to study the change coming about in business, social and political activity.
- *Policy makers* within companies who need to create policies and practices that make it possible to manage change
- *Managers* who need information to effectively manage the future Southern African business undertaking
- *Students* of change.

*Please note that seating is limited at the Convention; the old adage of "first come", will have to be adhered to.*

### FEE:

**R100,00** for members of the Institute of Personnel Management (Southern Africa)  
**R125,00** for non-members.

Fees include:

- all lunches and teas/coffees
- entrance fee to a special "get involved" evening of entertainment
- the Sunday Times cocktail party on Friday, September 9th.
- bound copies of all presentations which will be handed out at the close of the Convention.

### ATTENTION: NEWCOMERS TO IPM

For those of you new to IPM and/or in the field, we are providing three special services:

A "get acquainted/get involved" evening on Thursday, September 8th.

A newcomer's booth in the foyer

An introduction service to leaders in the field: Look for IPM staff dressed in distinctive blue — tell them what subject you wish to discuss — they will introduce you to a leader in the field.

*The President and the Executive Committee of the Institute of Personnel Management (Southern Africa) welcome you to the IPM's*

## 21ST ANNUAL CONVENTION

*at*

RAND AFRIKAANS UNIVERSITY  
JOHANNESBURG

SEPTEMBER 8TH TO 10TH, 1977

## 1977 CONVENTION EVENTS

### THURSDAY: 8TH SEPTEMBER, 1977

- 07h30 Onwards *Registration and Coffee*  
Foyer in front of Lecture Room C-LES-101, Orange Block, Rand Afrikaans University.
- 08h30 (sharp) *Official Opening* by the Honourable Minister of National Education, Dr. P. Koornhof.
- 09h45 to 16h30 *Convention*
- 19h30 *Get Acquainted/Get Involved Social Event* at the 'Pig and Whistle' Milpark Holiday Inn (Special Entertainment)

### FRIDAY: 9TH SEPTEMBER 1977

- 08h30 (sharp) to 16h30 *Convention*
- 17h30 *Sunday Times Cocktail Party* to be held at the Rand Afrikaans University, Auckland Park, Johannesburg.

### SATURDAY: 10TH SEPTEMBER 1977

- 08h00 (very sharp) to 16h00 *Convention*
- 16h00 to 16h15 *Closing of the Convention* by the President, Mr. Garry Whyte, Hon. F.I.P.M.

Lunches and teas/coffees will be served in the cafeteria of the Rand Afrikaans University throughout the Convention programme.

## HOURLY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### *Presenters and Participants — Please Note:*

The heavy demand for time has made it necessary for us to run the sessions with little break in between. It is essential that both presenters and participants adhere to the allotted times. Any follow-up discussion must be delayed until a later time or held in the foyer.

### SPECIAL SERVICE : QUESTIONS

Those special questions you wish to put to presenters may be written out on special question slips. The slips will be passed on to the named presenter and a written reply sent back to you in the post.

Look for the question desk in the foyer.

### THURSDAY: 8TH SEPTEMBER 1977

**Foyer of Lecture Hall C-LES-101, Orange Block, Rand Afrikaans University, Auckland Park, Johannesburg.**

- 07h30 to 08h15 *Registration and Coffee*
- 08h15 to 08h30 Seating in Lecture Hall C-LES-101.
- 08h30 to 08h35 *Opening prayer by Dr. J. Malan*, NGK, Aasvoëlkop.
- 08h35 to 09h00 *Setting the Scene*  
Why Quo Vadis?  
Mr. Peter Berry, Executive Director, Institute of Personnel Management (Southern Africa)
- 09h00 to 09h10 *Official Opening and Welcome to the Guest of Honour*  
Mr. Garry Whyte, President, Institute of Personnel Management (Southern Africa)
- 09h10 to 09h45 *Opening Address by the Guest of Honour, the Honourable Minister of National Education, Dr. P. Koornhof, M.P.*

## TRAINING

Two introductory presentations to new training needs in the new environment:

- 09h45 to 10h15 (a) *"White Involvement in Black Advancement"* - Dr. J.C. van der Walt - Superintendent, Personnel, Alusaf, Richards Bay, looks



at what a *labour intensive organisation's* total training responsibility should be when situated in a Black development area.

- 10h15 to 10h45 (b) *"Training in the Non-labour Intensive Environment"*. We seem, always, to fix our sights on the training requirements of the labour-intensive organisation, but what should a non-labour intensive commercial organisation's total training responsibility be and why.

*Des Tobin*, Legal and General Assurance Society Ltd.

- 10h45 to 11h15 Tea in the cafeteria

- 11h15 to 11h45 *"Cost Effectiveness of Training and how this leads to recognition of, and support for the training function"*

*Sias Odendaal*, Furniture Industry Training Board.

- 11h45 to 12h15 The Challenge we will have to face in the future *Mickey Bebb*, Senior Lecturer at the Graduate School of Business, University of the Witwatersrand, throws out the challenge: *"We must stop merely training and begin improving performance"*

- 12h15 to 13h00 *"Black Technical Skills Training"*  
Give a man a skill and he is a satisfied member of a society.

*Joos Lemmer*, Principal, Chamdor In-Service Training Centre looks at the best method of skills training and gives comment on how industry can more effectively use these centres.

- 13h00 to 14h15 Luncheon in the cafeteria.

## PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION The Neglected Art?

- 14h15 to 14h45 Introductory Presentation:

*"What should you do to successfully administer personnel and what criteria should be used to measure the effectiveness of this administration?"*

The IPM is honoured to present *Captain M. Steyn*, Director, Personnel Systems, SA Defence Force, who has studied this macro-problem both in South Africa and overseas.

- 14h45 to 15h00

*? Mystery Speaker ?*

Hint: Which is more important to our future — a company car or township houses?

- 15h00 to 15h15

Tea in the cafeteria

- 15h15 to 16h00

The well-known *Professor W. Backer* of the Timber Industry Manpower Services, tells us of his latest findings:

*"The NIPR and the Paterson Evaluation Systems: A Comparison"*

- 16h00 to 16h30

*"Unified Pay Scales: South African Case Study."*

*Ben Venter*, Personnel Manager, Nordberg Manufacturing Co. SA (Pty) Ltd. takes us through one of the most vexing questions facing Southern Africa today.

- 16h30

CLOSE OF CONVENTION PRESENTATIONS

SOCIAL EVENT FOR ALL DELEGATES

- 19h30

*Get Acquainted/Get Involved Social Event* at the *Convention Hotel*, the *Milpark Holiday Inn*.

*The Pig and Whistle Pub* has been reserved for the IPM. This new fun pub is surely the "in" place in Johannesburg. Lively entertainment and lovely dainties to serve your drinks — it's guaranteed to let all your cares roll away and allow us to get involved in true Convention spirit!

Special entertainment will be provided by *Shinnery* who play Bluegrass and country music like you never heard before. Wives and girlfriends welcome.

For a long time now, the IPM has needed to "Get Acquainted" and "Get Involved". Please make a special effort to join your colleagues at this specially arranged event.

FRIDAY: 9th SEPTEMBER 1977

## INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS A Scientific Step Forward

- 08h30 to 09h15

Introductory Paper by

*Professor N. Wiehahn*, Adviser to the Minister of Labour  
*"The South African Industrial Relations scene over the next five years — both de juri and de facto"*

After listening to Professor Wiehahn, some immediate questions may come to your mind. The first of these will be handled by

09h15 to 09h45	<i>Dennis Keenan-Smith</i> of Bruynzeel Plywoods Ltd.  <i>"The Relationship between Industrial Relations and Personnel Management."</i>
09h45 to 10h15	<i>"What a typical South African Industrial Relations policy and plan should be"</i>  <i>Dr. A. Moloi</i> , Industrial Relations Officer, LTA.
10h15 to 10h30	<i>? Mystery Speaker ?</i>  Hint: The forgotten workers in South Africa — The non-managerial monthly paid staff
10h30 to 11h00	Tea in the cafeteria
11h00 to 11h45	Theory is easily accepted but . . . <i>"How do you measure the effectiveness of Industrial Relations Management?"</i>  <i>Joe Horner</i> , S.A. Breweries
11h45 to 12h15	<i>"The real need to have effective liaison committees in labour intensive organisations, especially in view of the new thinking at government level on this issue."</i>  <i>Martin Masipa</i> , S.A. Breweries
12h15 to 12h45	<i>"Is the Black matriculant prepared to enter the system of free enterprise"</i>  <i>Jaap Strydom</i> , Regional Director of Bantu Education, will talk frankly on a problem that has not yet reached commerce and industry.
12h45 to 13h00	<i>"What are the next job categories to "Black-out" i.e. during the last ten years we have seen shop assistants, drivers, servicemen, operators, etc."</i>  <i>Wilby Baqwa</i> , Roberts Construction
13h00 to 14h15	Luncheon in the cafeteria

## MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

### At last — local problems with local solutions!

14h15 to 14h45	Introductory Paper:  <i>Professor Wynand Pienaar</i> , School of Business Leadership, UNISA.  <i>"Management by Groups"</i> .
14h45 to 15h15	<i>Dick Sutton</i> , S.A. Breweries, and his address —  <i>A new management skill — Industrial Relations</i>
15h15 to 15h30	Tea in the cafeteria
15h30 to 16h00	<i>"The developing Black manager — his most pressing needs and how to meet them"</i>  A "how to" presentation by <i>Tom Mollete</i> , Branch Manager, Barclays Bank, Dube, who has personally climbed the ladder from obscurity to being a (true) manager.
16h00 to 16h30	<i>"Guidelines to businesses and human resource developers on ways of effectively using the Business Schools to help with manager development"</i>  Professor David Limerick, Witwatersrand Graduate School of Business.
16h30	CLOSE OF CONVENTION PRESENTATIONS

## SOCIAL EVENT FOR ALL DELEGATES

17h30	Sunday Times Cocktail party at which the following official presentations will be made:  Honourary Fellowship Personnel Man-of-the-Year Student-of-the-year  The cocktail party will be held in the cafeteria at the Rand Afrikaans University, Auckland Park, Johannesburg.
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SATURDAY: 10th SEPTEMBER 1977

Please note 08h00 start

## MANNING Future People! Future Jobs!

08h00 to 08h45	<p>Introductory Paper:</p> <p><i>A complete manning programme to meet tomorrow's needs: Comment on all the aspects as they apply to all levels and groups of employees, highlighting the points of difference between the manning practices of today and tomorrow"</i></p> <p><i>Mof Lemmer</i>, Director, Personnel, Sigma.</p>
08h45 to 09h15	<p>The important question of <i>Testing</i> will be handled by <i>Dr. G. Nelson</i>, Director, N.I.P.R. as he discusses —</p> <p><i>"Is testing really valid in Southern Africa where there are so many different ethnic groups and transitional groups; and what should a company's testing strategy be?"</i></p>
09h15 to 09h45	<p><i>B. Urban Lombard</i>, Lecturer in Business Economics, UNISA, will cover his topic with the utmost care —</p> <p><i>"Skills in Interviewing and Selection of the "New Era" township Black work seeker.</i></p>
09h45 to 10h15	<p>Seldom have we time; <i>Peter Sykes</i>, Personnel Director, Pfizer Laboratories</p> <p><i>"Manpower Planning on the back of a cigarette box"</i></p>
10h15 to 10h45	Tea in the cafeteria
10h45 to 11h15	<p><i>Mr. H.A. Peters</i>, who is from Sanlam's top management team will take us right into the future with his presentation on</p> <p><i>"The utilisation of the computer in Personnel Management"</i></p> <p>This presentation takes a graphical look at the possibilities of utilising the power of computer technology in personnel management. Looking at the personnel functions as an open system, it suggests practical ways of moving from the present position to an integrated personnel information system.</p>

## ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM The Road Ahead

11h15 to 12h00	<p>The road along which we have travelled stretches back to 1946 when the IPM was started. Many lessons have been learnt during our proud history — can we learn from the past?</p> <p><i>A chat with long standing practitioners who have enjoyed a long and successful career:</i></p> <p>Dr. Simon Biesheuvel, Hon. F.I.P.M. Dr. Pinkie Hill, Hon. F.I.P.M. Mr. Matie Swart, Hon. F.I.P.M. Mr. Dave Hanson, Hon. F.I.P.M.</p>
12h00 to 12h30	<p><i>"The Conflict of the Black personnel man in having to balance professional ethics with cultural and political pressures — what can management do to help?"</i></p> <p><i>Wells Ntuli</i>, President, Personnel Management Association.</p>
12h30 to 13h00	<p><i>"The Professional Practitioner in the years to come"</i></p> <p><i>Garry Whyte</i>, President, IPM (Southern Africa)</p>
13h00 to 14h15	Luncheon in the cafeteria

## BROADER SOCIO-POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE The environment we live in and cannot ignore

14h15 to 15h00	<p><i>"Social Responsibility"</i></p> <p><i>J.C. Knoetze</i>, Chief Director of the Vaal Triangle Bantu Administration Board.</p>
15h00 to 15h30	<p><i>"The S.A. Economy and its Human Resources"</i></p> <p><i>Dr. Robert Smit</i>, Managing Director, Santam International.</p>
15h30 to 16h00	<p><i>"Personnel Management under pressure — the next five years"</i></p> <p><i>Dr. Lucien Cortis</i>, Tongaat</p>
16h00 to 16h15	<p><i>Official Closing by the President of the Institute of Personnel Management (Southern Africa),</i></p> <p>Mr. Garry Whyte.</p>

## REGISTRATION

A loose registration form has been enclosed with this brochure; please complete *all* the details contained therein and return, together with payment, to:

*Sue Stevens  
Institute of Personnel Management (Southern Africa)  
P.O. Box 31390,  
Braamfontein  
2017.*

Should you require further registration forms or any additional information please telephone Sue Stevens at Johannesburg 724-6374.

Please note that seating at the convention venue is limited; reservations will be dealt with on a "first come" basis, so please make your bookings early.

CLOSING DATE FOR RESERVATIONS IS AUGUST 29, 1977

## THE CONVENTION HOTEL

All delegates from out of town are requested to use the Milpark Holiday Inn, which has been established as the Convention Hotel. The following special rates are being offered to delegates seeking accommodation during the Convention:

Single: R14,00 per night (normal rate is R16,00).

Shared Double: R17,50 (R8,75 per person) per night (normal rate is R20,00)

Please complete the enclosed ACCOMMODATION RESERVATION SLIP and return to:

*Sue Stevens  
Institute of Personnel Management (Southern Africa)  
P.O. Box 31390,  
Braamfontein  
2017*

*For your convenience, the normal deposit in respect of hotel accommodation has been waived.*

Transport will be provided on a daily basis from the Convention hotel to the Rand Afrikaans University and back and also to Jan Smuts airport on Saturday at the close of the convention.

CLOSING DATE FOR HOTEL ACCOMMODATION RESERVATIONS IS AUGUST 22, 1977.

## THE CONVENTION VENUE:

### **Rand Afrikaans University:**

A graceful, streamlined structure set in Auckland Park — this is South Africa's youngest university. Established in 1968 on the old Braamfontein Brewery site, the Rand Afrikaans University moved to its present premises at the beginning of 1975.

The policy that guided the planning of the RAU was that students should be able to reach any part of the campus within 10 minutes, and this necessitated a concentration of structures. Individual facilities at the University do not have separate buildings, and the lecture theatres are shared by all on a computerised timetable.

The buildings of the University are situated on a terrain of 77 ha and consist of a central horseshoe-shaped teaching complex comprising offices, *(A, B, C and D, Rings)* lecture theatres behind the central ring, *(C and D Les)* and again behind the lecture theatres, the laboratories *(C and D Lab)*. The library is to the right of the main entrance of the University and the University Club is situated at the opposite end of the main arcade.

The Inner court, which is approximately the size of Church Square in Pretoria, can also be used as an amphitheatre.

Parking facilities for approximately 1 200 vehicles have been provided for behind *A and B Rings* and adjacent to *C and D Labs*.

**INTERVIEW RECORD : A BLACK PERSONNEL PRACTITIONER PERSPECTIVE**

Interview : 23/4/98

I did a BA Soc Sci degree at the University of Zululand. Thereafter I worked as a social worker in Pietermaritzburg in a government office where I worked with coloured, indian and white social workers. But I was given little guidance and had to learn by observing others.

In 1973 I applied to Nestle's and got a job in their Pietermaritzburg Personnel Dept. But I was given little to do and being bored ended up reading newspapers. I learnt from friends of the Personnel Management Programme course at UNISA which was designed for black personnel officers for which I enrolled in 1975. It was tough as the company would not support me in undertaking the course. I had to take unpaid leave to attend the course sessions in Pretoria and had to pay for transport and accommodation. To save on days and accommodation costs I would travel up overnight by taxi to Pretoria arriving in time for the first day's lectures without a decent night's sleep. I managed to get a scholarship from UNISA for the fees. The course was made up of 30 participants, with equal numbers from the Johannesburg, Pretoria and Durban areas. Those from the Durban area included, JB Magwaza, Elliot Zondi (Unilever), Oscar Mlaba (now Mayor of Durban), Tom Dube (Bakers), Gumede (Lion Match). Among lecturing staff were Ben Mokoatle and Motsepe. It was here that I learnt what the job was all about. We had practical case studies and theory and the course proved very valuable to me.

I believe the Pietermaritzburg company only appointed me because they were instructed by their Head Office, in keeping with trends that began to emerge, to utilise black appointees in personnel functions. There was no real support or guidance. I spent six years with Nestle during which time I was trained and registered to run NIPR tests.

I believe companies took on black personnel officers after the 1973 Durban strikes to find a way of opening better communication channels between workers and management. Companies had begun to learn that the problem was not only low wages, but also other conditions of employment. Young lawyers at University of Natal did important research and produced much useful information revealing what the situation and conditions were really like. At this time the role of the Induna, who still played a powerful role in many companies, was questioned. At that time the Induna wore a grey dust coat and the black personnel officer wore a white dust coat. White personnel officers did not wear dust coats.

I am cynical of the reasons why companies appointed us at the time. We were supposed to be "go-betweens" for management and workers - a kind of buffer zone to filter information to management. The antagonism I often felt from management actually made me love my people in the factory more. Like many other black personnel officers, I felt I had a mission and my social work background assisted me in my work, as I had some idea as to how to assist workers with their problems.

In 1979 I attended the Development Programme in Labour Relations at UNISA, this time sponsored by the company. Our lecturers included Professors Nic Wiehahn, Blackie Swart and Willie Bendix. This was a recognised course and qualification, unlike the unrecognised programme that Luther Backer ran for black personnel officers at University of Fort Hare.

In 1980 I joined SAPREF as their Industrial Relations Officer with the understanding that I would deal with the unions that were becoming established there. I chose this position rather than a similar one at Ford in the Eastern Cape.

I became involved in the formation of the PMA and then the PPA. I feel the PPA died in JB's hands as he did not drive it. Many of us did not want the PPA to go the IPM route.

I fought the SABPP's drive to recruit blacks, because I saw it as a kind of closed shop which had an exclusive base which would adversely affect blacks who did not have the correct qualifications, although they may have had the required experience in personnel work. In the end I did join and offered myself as a mentor, but was never asked to do any mentoring, nor did I receive any training in mentoring.

**BLACK MANAGEMENT FORUM****“In search of Perfection”****MISSION:**

The Black Management Forum is to assist and encourage the development and advancement of members of the Black Community to ensure greater involvement and participation in the provision of effective leadership in business and the broader South African community.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- 2.1 To assist and encourage the training and development of black persons to be effective leaders.
- 2.2 To protect and enhance the interests of members within and without the workplace.
- 2.3 To assist in the recruitment, selection and placement of blacks.
- 2.4 To uphold and enhance highest professional standards and principles in business and management leadership.
- 2.5 To assume the role of an effective voice for the needs, aspirations and views of members.
- 2.6 To assist and encourage the provision of career guidance services and facilities to blacks.
- 2.7 To promote and maintain working relationships and links with organisations and interest groups that pursue similar objectives as of the Forum.
- 2.8 To promote and effective Forum for the exchange of information , views and experiences through a dynamic Forum.
- 2.9 To encourage and assist members to participate in the indigenisation of private sector enterprises.
- 2.10 To create and enhance greater exercise and awareness and involvement of members in the provision of effective leadership within the broader South African community.
- 2.11 To develop and implement programmes for monitoring individual and organisation performance in order to ensure the advancement of members of the Forum

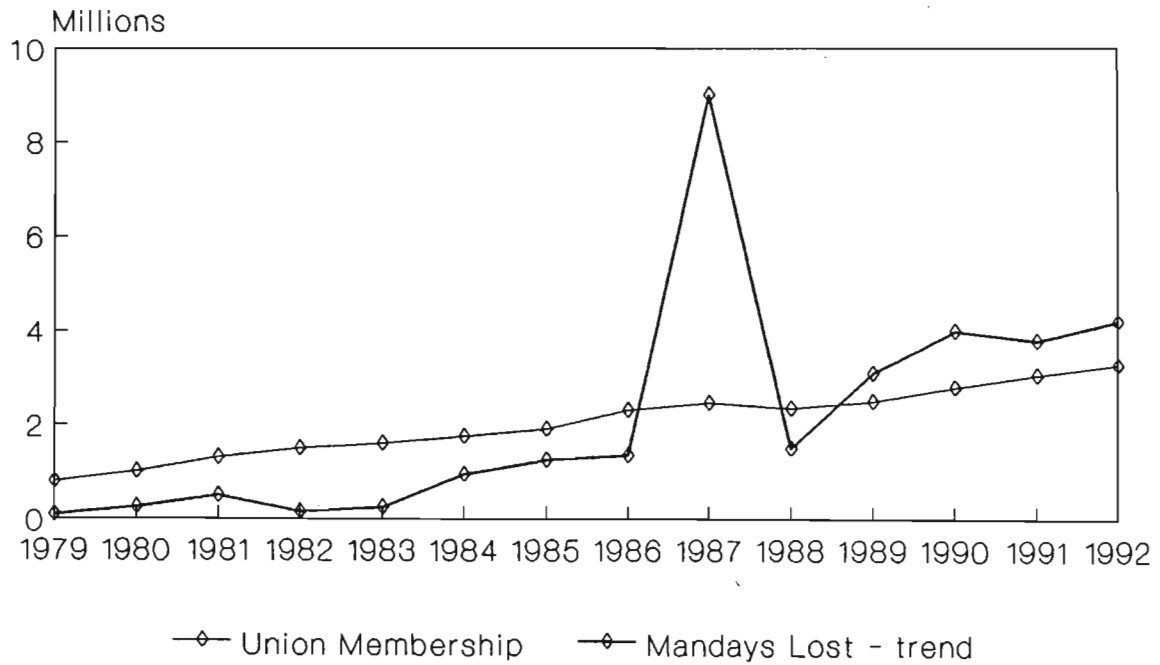
**POLICIES:**

- The BMF to liaise and co-operate with other organisations on issues of mutual concern.
- The BMF to associate with other organisations, but to reserve the right to disassociate with any statement or actions which might be in conflict with the organisation.
- The BMF believes in a democratic non-racial South Africa and an open equal education for all.
- The BMF believes in an economic system that will give fair and equal opportunity for all to participate and share in the resources of the country.

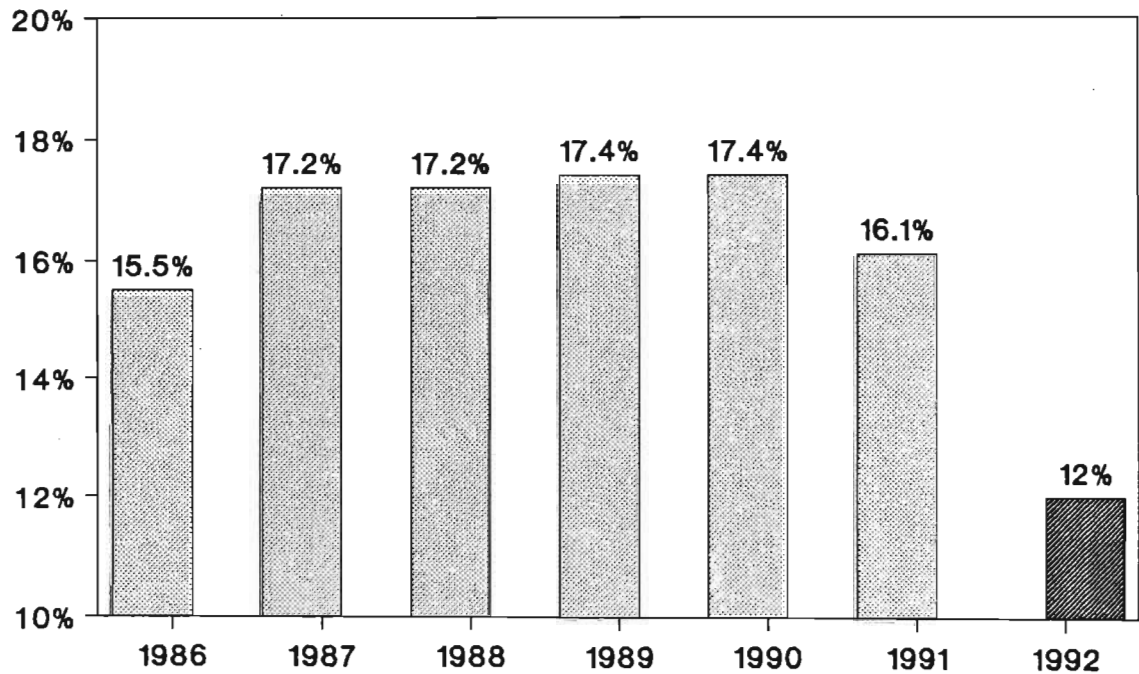
Founded 1976: Reg No: 81/0893/08: Mobil Centre, 8, Plein St Johannesburg: Tel 8365566  
(Copied from an original)



**FIGURE 5: STRIKES & UNION MEMBERSHIP  
(REGISTERED AND UNREGISTERED UNIONS)  
1979 - 1992**



**Figure 13 : LEVEL OF SETTLEMENT  
AVERAGE LEVEL OF SETTLEMENT  
AS A PERCENTAGE OF PAYROLL**



Source: Wage Settlement Survey Andrew Levy & Associates

IPM JOURNAL

MONTHLY THEMES

June 1986 - March 1987

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>THEME</u>
<b>1986</b>	
June	Black Advancement
July	Urbanisation and Black Housing
August	Industrial Relations
September	The Education Crisis and its Implications for the Manpower Field
October	Wage and Salary Trends for 1987
November	Annual Convention Report
December	Organisation Development & Planning
<b>1987</b>	
January	No Theme
February	Social Responsibility
March	Computers in Personnel

(IPM Journal Themes)

## AMENDMENT TO SABPP REGULATIONS



*Huma van Rensburg, newly appointed registrar, SABPP.*

At a board meeting held on the 18th July 1989, the following amendments were made to the regulations of the South African Board for Personnel Practice:

**"Special Regulations Regarding Registration:**

In addition to the general regulations outlined in 4(a), (b) and (c) above the Board may:

- (i) Upgrade to Personnel Practitioner a person who is already registered as a Personnel Technician: provided that person has obtained a four-year post-matriculation qualification, recognised by the Board; has served an additional period of practical training and experience in Personnel work (which may, at the discretion of the Board, be a lesser period than two years) under the supervision of a registered Personnel Practitioner who shall endorse the eventual application for registration; and who has successfully undergone a Board Examination.
- (ii) Register as a Personnel Practitioner a person:
  - (a) without a tertiary educational qualification, but with at least twelve years relevant practical experience in Personnel work; and who has successfully undergone a Board Examination, or
  - (b) who is a graduate, or has a qualification deemed by the

Board to be of an equivalent level, even though this is not in a discipline or disciplines relevant to the field of Personnel Practice; who has at least eight years relevant practical experience in Personnel work; and who has successfully undergone a Board Examination.

**Note:**

The Board Examinations referred to in 4(d) (i) and (ii) may take the form of written essays, papers, standardized tests and/or research reports on a topic or topics determined by the Board; together with a professional interview."

The change in (i) above is designed as a bridging facility for Technicians to become Practitioners without having to go via a University, but staying in the Diploma stream.

In the second clause (ii), we are providing for the very few special cases where people have a great deal of Personnel experience at Practitioner level, but who have not been in a position to obtain appropriate academic qualifications.

In no way will registration standards be lowered, and the introduction of a Board Examination in these two categories, is designed to ensure the maintenance of high Professional standards.

IPM

**TABLE 3.2**  
**NUMBER OF GRADUATES AND DIPLOMATES,**  
**1971-1991, AND PROJECTIONS FOR 1992-2001**

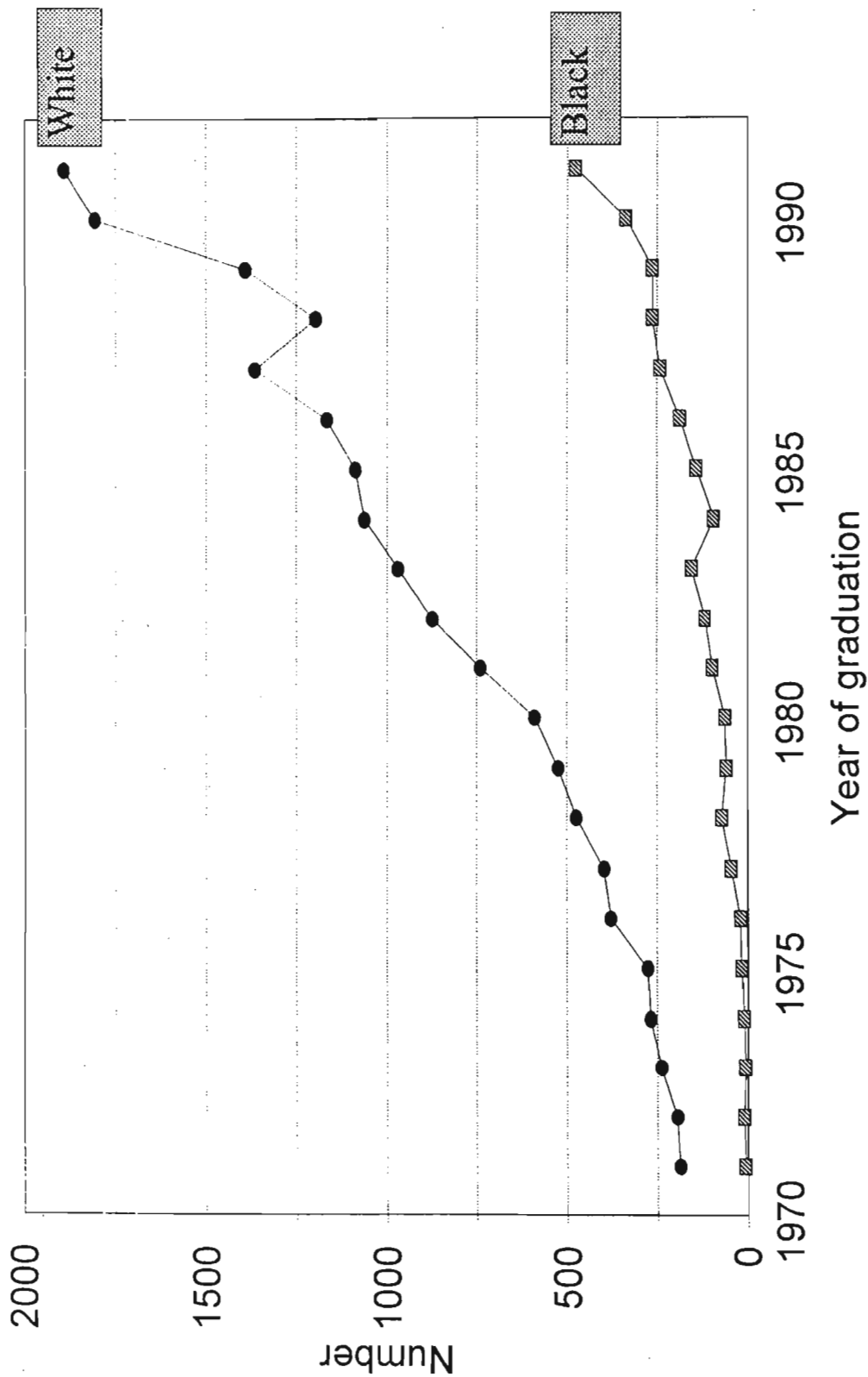
YEAR	Number
<b>Base period</b>	
1971	175
1972	195
1973	207
1974	248
1975	280
1976	294
1977	399
1978	442
1979	547
1980	585
1981	658
1982	840
1983	996
1984	1144
1985	1252
1986	1382
1987	1601
1988	1883
1989	1755
1990	2041
1991	2692
<b>Projection period</b>	
1992	2,800
1993	3,100
1994	3,400
1995	3,700
1996	4,000
1997	4,300
1998	4,700
1999	5,000
2000	5,400
2001	5,800
<b>Number of new entrants</b>	
1991-1996	17,000
1996-2001	25,200

Source: THE SUPPLY AND DEMAND OF PERSONNEL  
PRACTITIONERS IN SOUTH AFRICA: HSRC, 1995

FIGURE 3.2

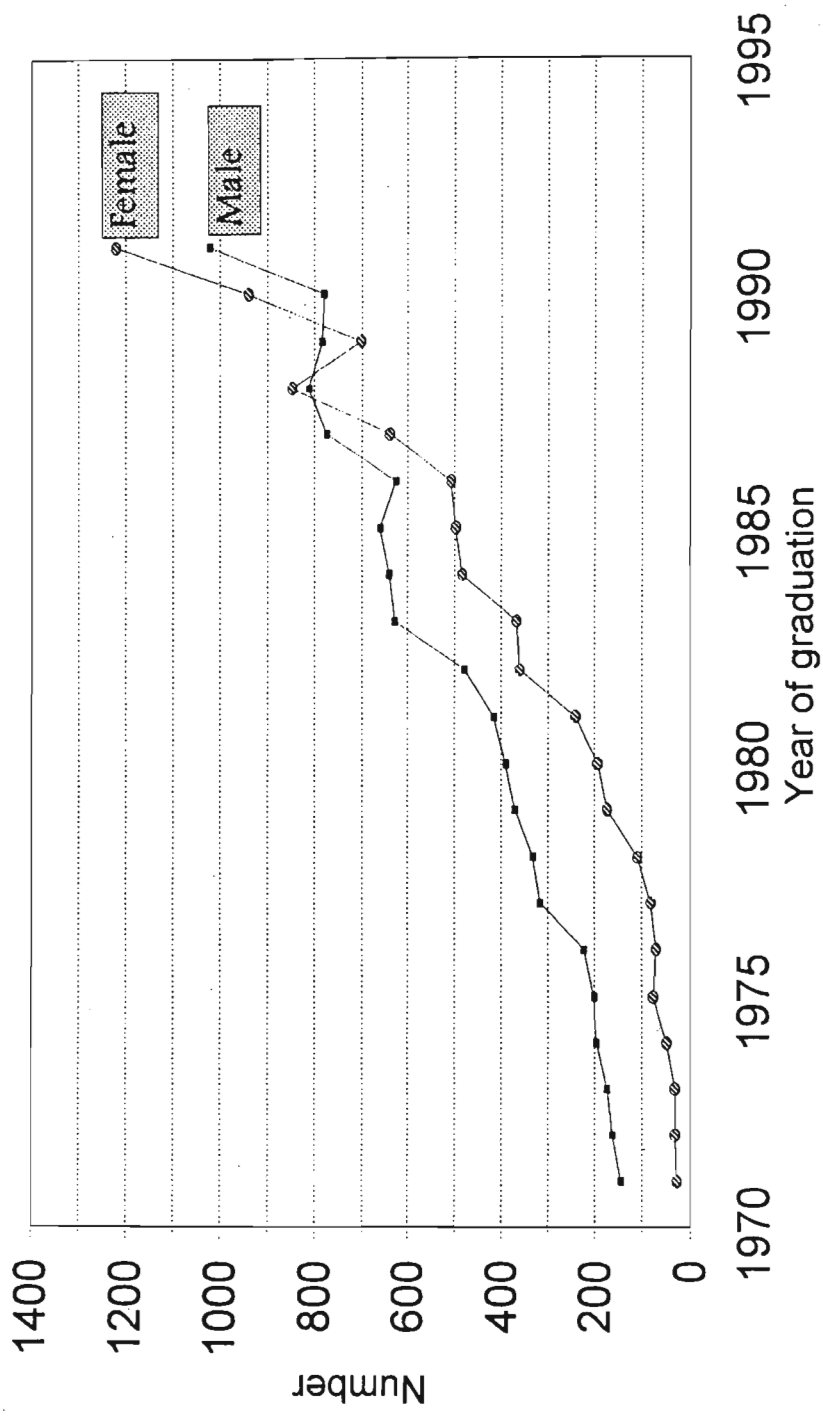
NUMBER OF GRADUATES, 1971-1991

Race



Source: THE SUPPLY AND DEMAND OF PERSONNEL PRACTITIONERS IN SOUTH AFRICA: HSRC. 1995

**FIGURE 3.1**  
**NUMBER OF GRADUATES, 1971-1991**  
**Gender**



Source: THE SUPPLY AND DEMAND OF PERSONNEL  
PRACTITIONERS IN SOUTH AFRICA: HSRC. 1995

## APPENDIX 5.7

**Interview with BONGANI MKHIZE**, HR Director Dano Textiles (Pty) Ltd on 20/7/1998. 10.00 - 11.30am in his office at Hammarsdale. Mkhize holds a BA and MA from Warwick University in Industrial Relations), an MBA and was at the time working on his PhD. During the late 1980's and early 1990's he was employed by Unilever at Maydon Wharf. During part of that time he was chairman of a black graduate group dealing with issues related to perceived racial bias raised by black management trainees and other black graduates in Unilever, which were presented for discussion with senior management..

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I believe the IPM was insensitive to BPPs. It can be seen in the way articles were written. BPPs could have written them, who were capable of representing their own views on issues.

BPPs looked to the PMA to set out their views, especially to the new graduates. The PMA discussion groups dealt with issues such as the role of blacks in organisations as this was a problematic area. We experienced ambiguity in two ways. We felt non-acceptance by management and non-acceptance by employees.

BPPs needed to create a synergy with forces working for change. They had no voice at the time other than the union movement. When blacks became managers it was expected of them to become the voice of the union members to the company.

The PMA tried to establish a role for black "professionals". The PMA in a way also represented black managers in general. For some reason BPPs were more articulate. Probably, because personnel has a wide view of the company's activities. Better positioned, therefore wider knowledge of what is going on.

There was unhappiness with the BMF in certain circles, especially in Natal. So many found a home in the PMA because disillusioned with the BMF, which was seen as a social group and they did not deal with plant (factory) issues.

We were representatives of the country; to speak for the community. If we did not we failed as we were expected to lead. But managers could not act like trade unionists. What were we to do? It was difficult.

The community is important to us. Many of us played a significant role in the community. I had a phone and a car. The community expected me to help when in difficulty. They would line up to use my phone. I would take people to hospital in the middle of the night. So we had a sensitive community role.

We also had a political role. We were expected to say where we stood. IFP or ANC? That also lead to difficulties in the community.



## APPENDIX 5.7

When we became managers we were at a disadvantage. We did not understand business. In our daily work we would sort out people issues, eg., loans for personal problems. Workers would say "we can't go to the white manager because he won't understand. But you do" But we did not fully understand the cost to the company of endless loans, and anyway the company was rich. When the loan was turned down, it was easy to say the company is exploiting the people.

We also needed to be accepted by white colleagues- after all they were our doorway to the future and our promotion. It was an ambiguous existence. It was hard trying to decide to what extent you could support employees.

IPM could have played an important role. They did not understand the sensitivities. IPM did not allow for our development. Inter-cultural courses were an embarrassment as were assertiveness courses

It was lonely to be a BPP. One felt isolated. Workers did not know where we stood and therefore we were not trusted. The community wanted us to be one of them. (This was during the time of the UDF)

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Subsequent telephone discussion to clarify some issues on 12/8/1998

There was a major conflict of loyalty to our people and the labour movement, eg., My uncle worked at LBL, MW. He was active in the labour movement. He had helped me with my education. It was expected that I would now help as I was in a management position. We were seen as 'brokers' to resolve situations between management and workers. The conflict was understood to be between capital and labour. Today (1998) the climate is different. The government has changed and there is a process of change going on. The parties are working together. The debate is open and there is no fear.. We can differ among ourselves.

It was important to feel one belonged, had recognition and to feel good about these things, by being recognised by a recognised body.. We did not want to be part of a discredited body (IPM) which had links with the government. We tried to create our own. We wished for international recognition. We were concerned about the SABPP because of its links with the IPM and were thus critical of it and because it was seen to be creating exclusive conditions which were perceived as racism. The dilemma was that if you did not register you may not have a future because you were not registered as a professional with a "body"

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IPM: Institute of Personnel Management

PMA: Personnel Management Association, which later became the PPA (Personnel Practitioners Association)

SABPP: South African Board of Personnel Practice